THE TIMES

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How the 'Headless Man' was trapped page 8

I became a witch ...and it's wicked! page 21

TOMORROW IN THE SATURDAY TIMES Brat Pop's next big thing

30p EVERY WEEKDAY

● What next for Noel Edmonds? *media times* pages 38-41 ● FREE BOOKS FOR SCHOOLS token page 26

Outcry over £18 charge for pensioners

Millennium Dome tickets cost up to £20

By Mark Henderson and Adam Sherwin

THE Millennium Dome will be Britain's most expensive tourist attraction, with adults paying £20 each for full-price tickets.

Admission prices for the £758 million exhibition announced yesterday by the New Millennium Experience Company are particularly steep for the elderly. Single pensioners must pay £18 for a ticket — a discount of just 10 per cent — while students pay £16.50 and the unemployed get in for £12.

But one offer announced yesterday should be welcomed by people in remote areas. National Express coach lines are introducing a £29.99 flat-rate return fare from anywhere in the country, which includes Dome entry. This represents a saving of up to £13 on the company's normal fares.

Pensioners groups immediately attacked the Dome entry fee and claimed that the "outrageous" cost would deter elderly visitors. Alyson Rose of Help the Aged said: "A price of at least half that would be much more realistic — £18 is just under a quarter of the basic state pension." The basic state pension is £66.75, while the average jobseeker's allowance is £50.35.

The £20 ticket for adults is the highest in Britain, beating Alton Towers at £19.50. Families will get big discounts, however. The "Family Five" ticket for two adults and three children or one adult and four children costs just £57, or £11.40 each. That compares favourably with other similar attractions - Alton Towers and Chessington World of Adventures offer a £59 deal for four people, while Thorpe Park has a similar ticket at £56. A single ticket for a child aged 5-15 will cost £16.50, while children under 5 go free.



"Well, so much for the Government's anti-poverty crusade"

The Millennium Experience company said that most pensioners would come as part of a family group, or would benefit from a £12 price for groups of 15 or more senior citizens. Adults in groups of at least 15 will also get money off, and a million schoolchildren will win free visits under a lottery announced on Wednesday by the Prime Minister.

Dome prices are deliberately pitched to encourage visitors to come in groups. Jennie Page, chief executive of NMEC, said: "We want people to come to the Dome with family and friends, making the millennium a shared experience they will remember for the rest of their lives."

The prices were fair, and should be compared with one-off events like World Cup football matches or opera performances rather than theme parks that open every day of every year. Lord Falconer of Thoroton, the Minister in charge of the Dome, said they represented "great value for money".

But Peter Ainsworth, the Shadow Culture Secretary, was more critical. "A trip to the Dome was never going to be a cheap day out, but whether it represents value for money will depend upon what is in it," he said. "It does seem strange that the pricing policy appears to take a more favourable approach to jobseekers than it does to senior citizens." Campaigners said the prices would be too much for families on income support or lone parents.

The New Millennium Experience Company must recoup £194 million from ticket sales, merchandising and other commercial deals to meet costs, and must attract 12 million visitors to meet targets. Up to two thirds of all tickets will be sold at a discount, and up to 2.4 million will go to overseas tourists. The rates were set by the NMEC board.

Combined packages involving rail, air and boat travel on the Thames will be available.

Tickets will go on sale on September 22 at National Lottery outlets across Britain, and through the Dome's own call centre. No tickets will go on sale for Millennium Eve. Up to 10,000 members of the public will be at the opening night but they are likely to be selected by ballot.

The National Express offer could prove tempting to travellers who want a cut-price ticket to London but do not want to visit the Dome. According to National Express's current tariffs, a single adult can buy a standard three-month return ticket from Aberdeen to London for a standard fare of £43. By taking the Dome offer, £13 could be saved.

National Express said: "The finer details have yet to be confirmed but this is a very specific offer and we have not specified yet how and when it will be made available." The Dome tickets will include the provision to return the next day.



THE PRICE LIST

INDIVIDUALS	GROUPS
Adults: £20	"Family Five" (2 adults/3 children, or 1 adult/4 children): £57.00
Children 5-15: £16.50	Pensioners (15 or more): £12 each
Children under 5: free	Student/college trips: £14.50 each
Students: £16.50	Adults (15 or more): £17.50 each
Pensioners: £18.00	School visits: £8 each
Unemployed: £12.00	



A triumphant Mick Fitzgerald and See More Business after their Gold Cup triumph yesterday

Times tipster's golden 3,000-1 treble

By Alan Lee
Racing Correspondent

THE final day of the Cheltenham National Hunt Festival was a triumph for the Somerset trainer Paul Nicholls and for *The Times* racing tipster Rob Wright.

Nicholls produced See More Business to win the Tote Gold Cup at 16-1, part of a remarkable treble for Wright (below), who also tipped Anzum, the 40-1 winner of the Bonusprint Stayers' Hurdle, and Space Trucker, who won the Grand Annual Chase at 7-2. Anyone



investing £1 on the three horses to win would have collected £3,136.50.

See More Business, unlucky when well fancied last year, prevailed by a length from the 66-1 shot Go Ballistic. The winner was ridden by Mick Fitzgerald, who won Wednesday's Queen Mother Champion Chase on the Nicholls-trained Call Equiname

Until this week, Nicholls had not trained a Cheltenham winner. Now he has three and taken the lead in the race for the trainer's championship.

Racing, pages 46, 47, 52

Tougher GM laws sought

By Valerie Elliott, Whitehall Editor

NEW laws on labelling genetically modified (GM) foods do not go far enough, Britain's leading supermarket chains said last night.

Members of the British Retail Consortium, which represents 90 per cent of retailers including Sainsbury's, Tesco and Asda, said that they would be labelling foods containing any GM ingredients, including oils and additives not covered by the regulations.

Shops will face fines of up to £5,000 from today if they fail to label foods which contains GM soya and maize. But restaurants and other catering outlets will have another six months before they have to declare if any of their dishes contain GM foods. They will not have to list ingredients on the menu, but customers will be able to ask waiters for detailed information on what is in their meal.

Friends of the Earth complained that the new laws would not enable consumers to avoid eating GM ingredients as unsegregated food stocks continue to be allowed into Britain.

Caterers' grace, page 4
Leading article, page 23

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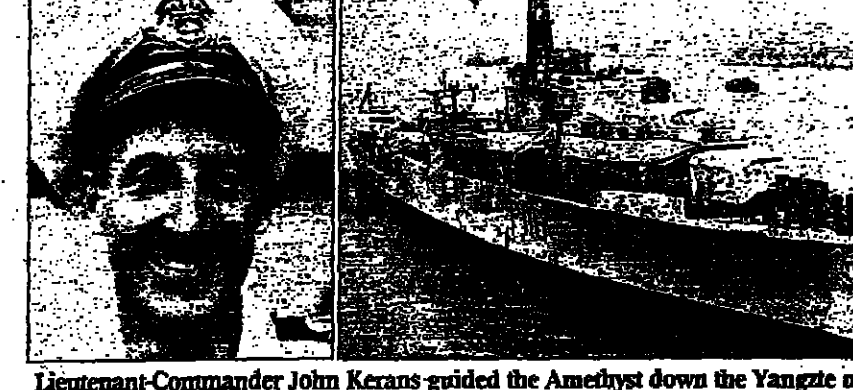
Admirals bridge cultural divide to hail the Purple Stone Hero of 50 years ago

From James Pringle in Beijing

IN AN extraordinary gesture of goodwill, almost unheard of in more than 200 years of Sino-British relations, two admirals from Britain and China yesterday took part in a ceremony to mark the tragic events that followed communist shelling of the British frigate, *HMS Amethyst*, on the Yangtze River 50 years ago.

Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, the First Sea Lord, and Admiral Zhao Guojun, Deputy Chief of Staff of the People's Liberation Army Navy, dropped a floral wreath over the side of the *HMS Boxer* into the muddy waters of the Yangtze near Shanghai. In doing so they honoured the 17 British and Chinese crew members who died during the seige.

The *Amethyst*, on a mission to Nanking to relieve another Navy warship acting as guardship at the British Embassy, was fired on and disabled by communist artillery batteries. After three months trapped on the river while repairs were carried out, the frigate slipped away one night to freedom.


Lieutenant-Commander John Kerans guided the Amethyst down the Yangtze under fire

Even today, local Chinese recount the saga of the ship they call the "Purple Stone Hero". "It's an integral part of communist folklore," one analyst said.

Last night the widow of the commanding officer of the *Amethyst* spoke of her gratitude at the way the 1949 incident had been remembered in China.

Stephanie Kerans, widow of Lieutenant-Commander John Kerans, whose bravery and leadership skills led to the dramatic dash for freedom down 140 miles of the treacherous Yangtze under heavy artillery and machinegun fire, had been unaware of yesterday's wreath-laying ceremony. On hearing the news, she said: "I am very happy to hear about this. It will be 50 years next month since the *Amethyst* incident and there are plans to hold anniversary celebrations in Plymouth."

Mrs Kerans, who lives in Surrey, said she still had a miniature of the frigate which she received from King George VI when she and her husband travelled to Buckingham Palace. Lieutenant-Commander Kerans received the Distinguished Service Order for his courageous leadership.

Anthony Galsworthy, the British Ambassador to China, witnessed yesterday's ceremony. The *Boxer* is on an informal visit to Shanghai — the first by a British warship for more than ten years.

Observers said the tribute was extremely rare in the history of British-Sino ties. With the successful handover of Hong Kong, however, relations between the two countries have improved significantly. The visit last October by Tony Blair was also regarded as a success by both sides.

The unprecedented gesture of goodwill paves the way for the visit to Britain in June of Admiral Shi Yunsheng, Commander of the PLA Navy.

Admiral Boyce, who is on a five-day visit, is also due to visit the Chinese naval base at Qingdao and Beijing.

Old foes' salute, page 14

The jargon of education is enough to make anybody sick


Lucy: in the doghouse after throwing up


MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

Lucy was sick on the Commons floor last Thursday morning. I now know why. This week, David Blunkett's guide dog was barred from Education Questions, answered before lunch yesterday.

Unkind tongues had suggested it was a speech by David Willetts, Mr Blunkett's Tory shadow, which had caused Lucy to take ill last time. Maybe; but something will have triggered the nausea. Watching MPs and ministers discussing education and employment yesterday, led by a dogless Secretary of State, we guessed the trigger. It's the appalling jargon.

Three sketchwriters were almost sick. Education has been hi-jacked by the educationalists. Ministers ' discourse has left this planet and spins towards a vortex of techno-babble. It started the moment Estelle Morris, a junior minister, rose. She started talking about phonics - and then "synthetic phonics".

The question was about learning to read. Or so I thought. But Ms Morris explained that reading meant "accessing the curriculum" and what was needed was a "value-added baseline assessment". She added: " what we now have under this Government to which we can definitely take credit for". Morris should access a grammar textbook; her phonics had gone awry. Andrew Smith, another minister, told us about " a comprehensive programme-two evaluation " of "core performance indicators". Mostly, Mr Smith was talking about New Deal (the definite article is omitted by the on-message) and New Deal triggers Gateways. Gateways, now " rolled out", are "up-and-running".

" Gateway has been an outstanding success-feature," wittered Smith. MPs should compare areas "where pathfinder areas were up-and-running with areas before New Deal was up-and-running". Backbencher David Lock (Lab, Wyre Forest) agreed (I think). " Gateway phase is absolutely vital to train people into being job-ready " .Not every backbencher was enthralled. Syd Rapson (Lab, Portsmouth N) confessed to being "an old sceptic" on "personal job accounts" which Smith said would be "up-and-running" next year (not yet rolled out, you see): but Syd's scepticism still looked up-and- . running. I doubt he's job-ready. Margaret Hodge, a minister who wanted " employment-focussed action plans", told MPs that a " client-focussed service" could "access" an "extensive range" of something or other. Lucy would have been accessing her sick bag.

But back to education, where we were told that " individual learning accounts " would act as "catalysts". This is not even good chemistry, let alone plain English. When Mrs Hodge was asked about play schools we nursed the hope she might talk about toys and crayons. Some hope. " Diversity of provision, " she burbled, meant that " choice should not be decided by a producer-led interest". Poor Lucy. This was a world away from " sit! ", "heel!" and "good dog!". Another minister commended " nationwide access to interactive learning technology".

Even the normally plain-speaking Mr Blunkett, lacking Lucy's critical reaction, strayed. Talking of "basic skills needs" in individual learning accounts, he thought that "many account-holders will want to access advice and information. " A Liberal Democrat, George Willis (Harrogate & Knaresborough) thanked him for "rolling out the issue of tax relief". But Blunkett retains a sense of humour. When new Labour says (as Smith did yesterday) that a programme has made "an encouraging start" you know it's in deep trouble, but Blunkett wanted to assure MPs that under New Deal the jobless would be learning useful skills. As an example of a frivolous skill he was unwise to choose deep-sea-diving, our suntanned Deputy Prime Minister's latest passion. There were Tory whoops.

"Hoist with my own petard!" laughed Blunkett, who then (interestingly) covered his eyes in shame. What he meant, of course, was that he was upwardly-driven by his own catalyst, triggering a roll-out of self-focused embarrassment, now up-and-running.

Ministers defy lorry drivers over tax threat

By Arthur Leathley and Roland Watson

MINISTERS held firm last night over £2 billion of motoring tax increases despite threats from protesting lorry drivers to bring London to a standstill.

The drivers are preparing to converge on the capital on Monday in protest at fuel and vehicle tax rises announced in last week's Budget.

Downing Street tried to defuse the row by announcing a meeting next week between John Reid, the Transport Minister, and hauliers. However, the Prime Minister's official spokesman made clear that the tax rises were part of a Budget package that could not be "unpicked" for certain interest groups.

Tensions between the Government and hauliers grew as ministers angrily rejected claims that 400,000 British lorry drivers were worse off than overseas hauliers. The Government argued that overall operating costs for haulage companies were lower in Britain than in other countries.

Although senior figures in the industry tried to deter drivers from staging a roads protest, they said that the action was "inevitable" unless the Government was prepared to soften the impact of the taxes by offering rebates to lorry drivers. The protest is planned to take place near Park Lane on Monday, the day before Dr Reid meets hauliers.

British vehicle taxes and duty on diesel are the highest in Europe and lorry drivers claim they are losing business to overseas firms with lower operating costs.

Dr Reid used a Tory-inspired debate in the Commons to try to defuse Tory accusations that the Government was "taxing motorists off the road". He said: "To suggest that nothing was done in the Budget to assist haulage firms is a grotesque misrepresentaion of the facts."

Gillian Shephard, the Shadow Transport Secretary, accused the Chancellor of "using motorists as a private piggy bank". The Tories said that it was time to end the annual fuel tax escalator, which they introduced. "The whole point of an escalator is that when you get to the top, you get off," Bernard Jenkin, the transport spokesman, said.

The Government argues that running a company with 50 lorries would cost an extra £425,000 in France, £592,000 in Holland and £820,000 in Belgium. However, haulage industry figures suggest that the cost of operating a 40-tonne lorry in Britain is £28,000 a year, and £10,000 in France.

Frank Stears, a haulier whose splinter protest group TransAction is organising Monday's protest, said: "There will be so many of us that traffic will come to a halt. We want the Government to start taking notice of us."

The London protest will follow a string of demonstrations in major cities and at ports. Dan Hodges, of the Road Haulage Association, said: "We cannot support any action that is either illegal or inconveniences the public. But the Government must give an indication that there will be a genuine review of the draconian rates of taxation."



Eddie Izzard, Patricia Hewitt, the Economic Secretary, and Gordon Brown at the Gift Aid launch yesterday

Charity bonus targets young adults

By Alexandra Frean
Social Affairs Correspondent

A CAMPAIGN to encourage more young adults to make regular donations to charity was opened yesterday by the Chancellor Gordon Brown and the comedian Eddie Izzard.

Advertisements for the Gift Aid 2000 scheme, which provides tax relief on donations to Third World charities, will appear on beer mats and cinema tickets and will be backed up by a series of television commercials featuring Izzard. The £4 million campaign is aimed primarily at 18 to 34 year olds, identified as the group most likely to want to give to charity and most interested in tax-efficient ways of doing so.

The campaign follows recent figures published by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations showing that individual donations to charity have fallen by nearly a third in the past five years.

Gift Aid 2000 was started last year to encourage donations to education and anti-poverty projects in the world's 80 poorest countries. The Government will make a donation of £30 for every £100 that individuals give to charities working in this area. The minimum donation was reduced from £250 to £100 in last year's Budget and can be made as a lump sum or in small donations.

☐ Donors can join the scheme by calling 0845 075 2000 or by accessing the website www.giftaid2000.org.uk, where more information on the participating charities can be found.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Forces serve up 'ethnic' rations

The introduction of ethnically sensitive ration packs to cater for the different minorities joining the Armed Forces has played a part in doubling the number of black and Asian recruits in the Royal Navy this year. The proportion of ethnic minority personnel in the Navy is increasing from 0.8 per cent — 301 people out of a total 44,000 — to 1.6 per cent. The target is to increase the proportion to at least 5 per cent in four years.

Yesterday the new ethnic ration packs were unveiled — and tasted — by Doug Henderson, the Armed Forces Minister. To prove the quality of the new cooking styles, Mr Henderson had halal (Muslim) food for breakfast — a vegetable curry.

Captain Andrew Cameron, assistant director of naval recruiting, said the new food was a "metaphor" for the efforts under way in all three Armed Forces to enlist more black and Asian troops.

Health defeat

The Government suffered a fresh defeat in the Lords when peers voted to give privately treated patients the same regulatory safeguards as those in NHS hospitals. Peers voted 161-113 in favour of a Tory amendment during the detailed report stage of the Health Bill, which scraps GP fundholding. The defeat will almost certainly be overturned in the Commons.

Customs boost

More than 100 extra Customs and Excise officers will be deployed from the start of next month to combat alcohol and tobacco smuggling, the Government said. An estimated £1 billion tax is lost each year to tobacco smuggling. Lord McIntosh of Haringey said at Question Time that the frontline staff would be financed by £35 million from the spending review last July.

Bishop in court

An Anglican bishop has appeared in court on a charge of drink driving. The Right Rev Douglas Cameron, Bishop of Argyll and the Isles in the Scottish Episcopal church, made no plea when he appeared before Sheriff Colin McKay in Oban Sheriff Court. The offence is alleged to have happened a month ago, on the road to Tyndrum from Oban. The case continues on Monday.

Missing mother

The husband of a woman who disappeared ten days ago appealed for information yesterday as police began searching the Scottish Highlands where her car was found abandoned hundreds of miles from their Derby home. Anne Ball hired the car but it was found dumped on Monday. She has no connections with the area and police are baffled by her disappearance.

Fears over safety may put paid to protests

By Stewart Tendler
Crime Correspondent

ECO-warriors must be stopped from building fortified protest sites before they become the scene of a tragic accident, a Home Office report warns today.

Unless new trespass laws create fresh criminal or civil powers the increasing sophistication of "defences" built at contentious sites will inevitably lead to serious injury to bailiffs, police or protesters, according to the study from the inspectorate of constabulary.

The report Keeping the Peace examines current police readiness for disorder and warns that the threat of rioting has broadened from inner city unrest to "single cause protests" such as animal rights and environmental issues which can cost millions.

The two-year battle over the Newbury bypass in Thames Valley cost £18 million. Demonstrations against the export of live animals cost Essex and Sussex police £6 million.

Keith Povey, author of the report and one of the Home Office inspectors, warns that society will have to consider the balance between the rights of individuals to peaceful protest and their responsibilities as good citizens.

Howe says Hague stance on Europe could cost election

By Roland Watson, Political Correspondent

LORD HOWE of Aberavon said last night that William Hague's stance over the single currency could cost the Tories the next election. The former Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary said: "We have locked ourselves into a policy position from which there is no escape."

His comments, to be broadcast on BBC Wales on Sunday, appeared to be a clear breach of the Tory truce on Europe. Mr Hague had agreed with the party's pro-Europeans to leave the issue of the euro in the background until after June's European elections.

But to add insult to injury, Lord Howe added that Kenneth Clarke should have succeeded John Major as party leader. His criticism came as Mr Hague today tries to get onto the front foot over Europe and the crisis in Brussels.

The Tory leader will insist that none of the 20 European Commissioners who stepped down on Monday should be allowed to return to office. Tony Blair is supporting the reinstatement of both Britain's Commissioners, Sir Leon Brittan and Neil Kinnock. Mr Hague also hardened the Tories' stance on the issue of six-figure payoffs due to the Commissioners, saying that none should receive them because even those not named in the fraud report had been tainted.

Downing Street yesterday gave a strong nudge to the chances of Romano Prodi, the former Italian Prime Minister, succeeding Jacques Santer as the Commission President.

The Prime Minister's official spokesman said: "The Prime Minister is on record as someone who has a very good friendship with Prodi, but he also respects him as someone with considerable ability."

Bernard Connolly, page 22
Letters, page 23


Howe: said Tories were "locked in" over Europe

Scots colleges may introduce fees

By Jason Allardyce
Scottish Political Reporter

STUDENTS from England and Wales may have to pay £1,000-a-year tuition fees at Scottish universities while Scots study for free.

The Scottish Liberal Democrats has pledged to abolish the fees for students living in Scotland, bringing them into line with the policy of Scots Tories and the SNP.

Because Labour is unlikely to win overall control of the Scottish parliament on May 6, the opposition parties are likely to be able to vote out the controversial fees in the first year of the parliament.

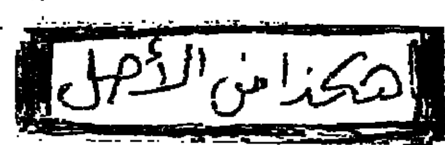
All three parties are also committed to eliminating the fourth-year fee which is levied on English, Welsh and Northern Irish students who come to Scotland for four-year degree courses. The educational reform has the support of the National Union of Students.

Jim Wallace, the Scottish Lib Dem leader, said that Scotland's economic prosperity in the next century depended on it being a world leader in education. "To achieve this, Scotland's young people must be educated to the highest level." Like the SNP, the Lib Dems believe that scrapping fees can be paid for by making savings in the £14 billion Scottish funding block. However, both are prepared to raise income tax by 1p to finance the move.

Susan Deacon, Labour's Scottish education spokeswoman, said the announcement showed that only Labour could be trusted not to make Scotland the most highly-taxed part of Britian.

She said that Labour was increasing access and opportunity for Scots students with an extra £241 million over three years to fund 42,000 more places.

INSIDE SECTION 2
What's gone wrong with Brookside? Phil Redmond explains
Media Times, page 38



Caterer ready to poach record

By Helen Rumbelow

A FORMER caterer from Wiltshire looks set to beat Richard Branson to his dream of circumnavigating the globe in a balloon.

Brian Jones, 51, has piloted the *Breitling Orbiter 3* to within one day of the finishing line. Yesterday he was willing his craft onwards as it approached the Atlantic desperately short of fuel.

To win one of the last great aviation prizes, he and his Swiss co-pilot, Bertrand Piccard, 41, must circle the globe, crossing the same meridian twice. They do not have to return to the Swiss Alps, from where they set out 18 days ago. Because they initially diverted to West Africa in order to double back on themselves and catch the best jet streams going over China, they can win by landing in Mauritania. They are due to reach this finish line of 9.27 degrees west tomorrow night. friday

The Fédération Aeronautique Internationale, the body regulating the challenge, also stipulates a minimum distance — more than 18,000 miles — to stop balloons flying a little circle over the North or South Poles.

Mr Jones and M Piccard went further than this after breaking the record for the longest distance flight last weekend. If they continue to this afternoon, they will break the record for the longest time a balloon has spent in the air.

The flight has taken its toll, and yesterday both exhausted pilots started taking oxygen after minor breathing problems. They feel ill and cold, and M Piccard, the grandson of Auguste Piccard, who invented the pressurised cabin used in modern balloons, alarmed the control centre in Geneva yesterday by sounding almost incoherent with fatigue.

Joanna Jones, Mr Jones's wife, said in Geneva that conditions inside the 6ft by 10ft capsul were grim. "They have no-one to sound off to and it's a great strain. Hopefully it should get better now they can smell the stable."

By finishing they will not only earn a $1 million prize put forward by Anheuser-Busch, the makers of Budweiser beer, but the envy of Richard Branson and their other rivals. Mr Branson said that he could identify with their feelings of tiredness and elation. "It looks very much like they're going to make it," he said. "But no-one must forget that the most dangerous part of the flight is landing a giant balloon without injury, especially as the pilots will be very tired and low on fuel."

The Virgin tycoon became obsessed with the challenge nearly ten years ago when he became the first to cross the Atlantic in a hot air balloon. Since then he has risked his life and a sizeable part of his fortune on four failed attempts £3 million a time.

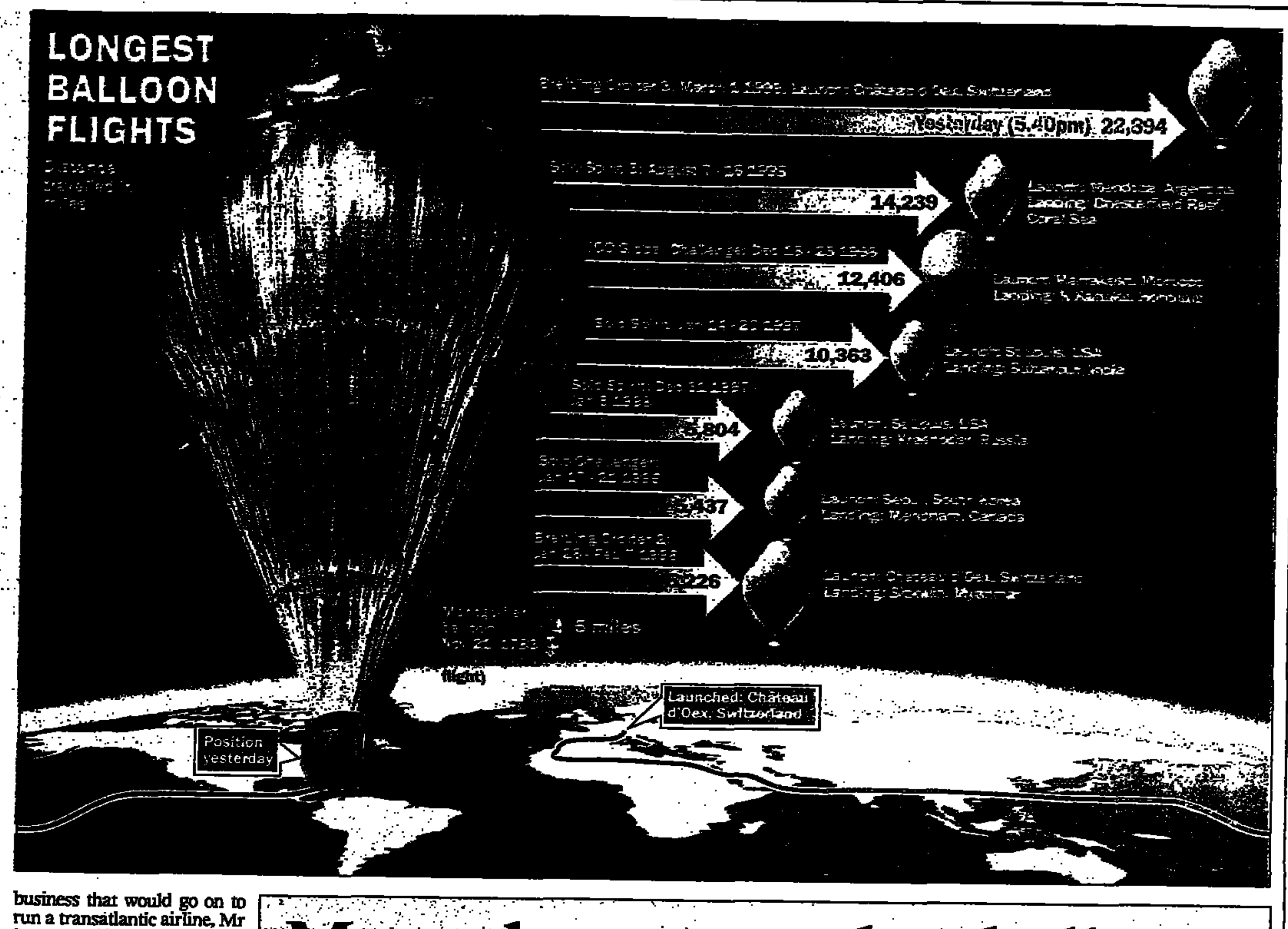
By contrast, Mr Jones, a grandfather of three from Devizes, was plucked out of obscurity to enter the competition in November. He had been part of the Breitling support team, and when the British pilot, Anthony Brown, dropped out at the last moment due to personality clashes with the mercurial M Piccard, he stepped in.

Mr Jones is a very different personality to Mr Branson. Like Mr Branson, he left school at 17, but while the young entrepreneur founded a business that would go on to run a transatlantic airline, Mr Jones went into the RAF and then a catering business.

In 1986 he was at a festival involving Cameron balloons in Bristol, took one flight and was hooked. He immediately bought his own balloon from Cameron, who went on to build the Breitling craft.

It became an all-consuming passion, and when his business suffered during the recession two years later, he gave it up to found his own ballooning company, becoming an instructor and an examiner. "He is not an adventurer, he's professional pilot who approaches things in a judged manner," Mrs Jones said.

Andy Elson, whose *Cable and Wireless* balloon came down near Japan while competing with the Breitling balloon, empathised with the strain in the capsule. "Brian is a lovely bloke and one of my best mates. It's nailbiting to watch him. But my overall feeling is that they must be safe."



Men who rose to the challenge

Steve Fossett
American millionaire
Three solo flights
Estimated cost to Fossett: £5 million

Richard Branson and Per Lindstrand
Virgin millionaire; Swedish businessman
Three flights, two abortive due to bad weather and lost balloon
Estimated cost to Virgin: £8 million

Richard Branson, Per Lindstrand, Steve Fossett
One flight
Total estimated cost to ICO Global Communications: £3 million

Bertrand Piccard
Swiss pyschiatrist
Three flights (with Wim Verstraeten, Andy Elson and Brian Jones respectively)
Estimated cost to Breitling: £9 million

Andy Elson and Colin Prescot
Two British balloonists
One flight
Estimated cost to Cable and Wireless: £3 million



Hempleman-Adams

Explorer abandons lone trek in Arctic

By Joanna Bale

A BRITISH adventurer yesterday abandoned his attempt to complete the last great Arctic challenge, a solo unassisted trek to the geomagnetic North Pole.

David Hempleman-Adams, 42, was due to be rescued from Canon Fiord, an iceshelf close to Ellesmere Island last night, after sending a radio message that he was having difficulties with his sledge and skis.

Mr Hempleman-Adams, of Box, near Corsham, Wiltshire, who had walked at least 30 miles since March 8, had been hoping to complete the 250-mile trek across mountains, ravines and moving ice in 20 days, without the aid of dogs, snowmobiles or air supplies.

He said: "I have completed enough solo adventures and I have taken a decision that this will be the last — it is not fair on my family."

Backroom worker who ensures seamless uplift

By Simon de Bruxelles
South-West Correspondent

ONE slipped stitch and it would be shower curtains for the Breitling Orbiter. But Eileen Davies, who spent eight weeks sewing the 180ft-high balloon together, is confident her seams will hold.

As the vast diaphanous envelope floats towards the finishing line, excitement is rising back at the Cameron Balloon factory in Bristol.

Every day as they arrive for work anxious staff stop to check the overnight progress reports pinned to the noticeboard. They know their handiwork is being put to the ultimate test, especially Miss Jones, who triple-stitched each seam before it was sealed to prevent any of the precious helium leaking out.

"We'll have a party if they make it," said Miss Davies, 26. "I always check the map in the morning and watch the news when I get home to find out how they're doing." Miss Davies, who has worked for the Bristol-based company's "gas" department for eight years, has only been up in a balloon once. She says the experience was "all right" but she would not want to swap places with the pilots of the Breitling Orbiter.



Eileen Davies: only been up in balloon once

Don Cameron, 59, the man who built Britain's first modern hot air balloon in the 1960s, and his team designed and built three of the four recent round-the-world challengers, including the Cable and Wireless balloon which broke the record for the longest flight last month before being forced to ditch in the sea off Japan. Only Richard Branson's pilot, Per Lindstrand, preferred to build his own.

Mr Cameron described the millionaire businessman's balloon as large but unsophisticated compared with the latest of the three Breitling Orbiters. He said: "We think Branson ran out of fuel somewhere over China so he never really had a hope of making it, though there is enough still enough rivalry in the attempt that he wouldn't tell us that."

Briton accuses Bangladesh police of rape

From Ahmed Fazl in Dhaka and Stephen Farrell

A BRITISH woman has claimed that she was raped by police in Bangladesh when she went to report a theft.

The tourist, who has not been named, said she was raped by four officers at a police station in the capital, Dhaka, some months ago.

Human rights lawyers claim that police regularly attack women in custody. The Foreign Office last night refused to discuss the case, but a spokesman reiterated advice by the British Consul in Dhaka that "women should not go into police stations or similar agencies".

The Foreign Office's official travel advice, last updated yesterday, does not mention rape, but says visitors should take extra care and adds: "There have been reports of police abusing their authority. Arrange to be accompanied to the police station when reporting incidents."

The woman, who has left Bangladesh, made no formal complaint and no charges were brought. Officials at the British High Commission said yesterday that the incident was considered serious and they had written to the Interior Ministry to express concern.

Under a law dating from the days of the Raj, Bangladeshi police can put any woman behind bars under the pretext of giving her "safe custody". Local newspapers have reported many incidents of rape and deaths in safe custody.

Last year a five-year-old girl was allegedly raped in a police mess inside the Chief Metropolitan Magistrates' Court complex in Dhaka. Aid workers say abandoned women, prostitutes and homeless children are particular targets of sexual abuse.

The main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party used the attack to condemn the secular Government of the Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina.

Father of Julie Ward tells court of last days

By Sam Kiley

JOHN WARD ' s 11-year crusade to find the killer of his daughter, Julie, entered a gruelling stage yesterday when he appeared in a Nairobi court to face Simon ole Makallah, the warden who led him to Julie's dismembered and burned remains.

Mr Ward, who has spent more than £300,000 in a quest which began in 1988 when the Kenyan authorities first claimed Julie had been killed by wild animals in the Masai Mara Reserve

Yesterday he told the court of the day when he heard that Julie, 28, had gone missing. Mr Ward said that Julie had been a "quiet girl, a gentle person".

"She avoided trouble where possible and she had a happy disposition. One of her hobbies was photograph." Mr Ward recalled that his daughter, went to the Masai Mara to photograph the annual migration of the wildebeest.

Caterers given respite over GM labelling

By Valerie Elliott, Whitehall Editor

SHOPS and supermarkets face fines of up to £5,000 from today if they fail to label any food which contains genetically modified soya and maize.

However, the country's 125,000 restaurants, fast-food outlets, cafes, pizza chains and hot-dog stands have until September 19 before they must know the GM contents of the dishes they serve. Menus will not have to list the GM content of every dish on offer. Instead notices will be on display on premises if any food contains GM soya or maize.

Customers will have to ask waiters and waitresses for specific information about dishes which contain a GM product. Restaurants will not be able to get away with "defensive labelling" saying that food "may contain" GM products.

Jeff Rooker, the Food Safety Minister, said: "Forget 'may contain'. We are not in the business of 'may contain'. It's got to say genetically modified or genetic modification. The EU directive states 'does contain'.

"What we are asking restaurants to do is to be in a position so that if a customer asks if there are GM ingredients to know, not to say 'I will check and find out next week'."

GM tomato paste is excluded from the new law but Mr Rooker said that premises had "a moral obligation" to inform customers if it was used.

He suggested that Zeneca's tomato paste could also soon be covered by further new laws which would also be extended to the GM content of additives and flavourings. The Government would also have to decide soon if a GM-produced tomato by Zeneca could be approved for sale.

The six-month gap for catering companies will allow staff to be trained to answer queries and will give them time to check upon their own supplies and if their ingredients contained GM soya or maize, Mr Rooker said. If mistakes were made, the prosecution would be against the catering owners or management and not the table staff.

The new laws will be enforced by environmental health officers but it is understood they intend to "go gently" until people understand the requirements. The new laws will not apply to ingredients such as the emulsifier lecithin and cooking oils. Although these products are derived from the GM process they contain no GM protein and so any meal cooked in GM soya oil or a chocolate biscuit can be labelled GM-free.

Most supermarkets in Britain have already introduced their own GM labels and most have also included GM derivatives not covered by the new laws. Some retailers have also banned GM ingredients in their own-brand products.

Catering companies said that the new laws were unworkable and unenforceable. Michael Gotliebb, director of the Restaurants Association, said: "Our members have spent a lot of money designing and printing menus and these may have to be changed to accommodate the new rules.

"Also, most of our suppliers don't have a clue whether or not their products contain GMs so how can they tell restaurateurs in the first place."

He called on the Government to say if the food was safe: "If they are not they should not be produced and if they are then the Government should stick to its guns and not bow to idiotic pressure. They seem to be taking the easy route out."

The new laws were also described as totally inadequate by environmental groups who believed the Government had "conned" the public and put the burden on small businessmen instead of large companies such as Monsanto.

Friends of the Earth, which has called for a five year ban on GM foods, said: "The reality is that the public will still be eating unlabelled food containing GM ingredients even after this law is passed."

☐ Lord Sainsbury, the Science and Technology Minister, has met the director of a company involved in genetically modified food research in which he had an interest "a number of times" the Trade and Industry Secretary said yesterday.

Stephen Byers said in a Commons written reply: "I understand that he has met with Christopher Stone of Diatech Ltd on a number of times on a personal basis but on no occasion were any aspects of the work or investments of any of the companies placed in the blind trust discussed."

John Redwood, the Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary, said: "How can the public believe that this minister is independently minded on GM foods and crops?"



From today, shops and supermarkets face a £5,000 fine for failing to label GM foods

Enforcement is likely to be costly and slow

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

ENFORCING the food labelling regulations is likely to prove an expensive operation for trading standards officers.

Tests exist for detecting whether foods contain genetically modified ingedients but they cost £100 to £200 a time and take ten days. At present only two public analysts' laboratories in Britain are equipped to carry them out.

One of the laboratories, at Worcestershire County Council, tested 200 food products for GM soya last autumn and found that about 60 contained some. Bob Stevens, a public analyst who works for the council, said that although they had been busy they had not yet had to turn away work. That could change if the new regulations produced a string of complaints to trading officers and they needed to be investigated.

The Food and Drink Federation, which welcomed the announcement by Jeff Rooker, says that it now urgently needs clarification from the European Commission over the details of the regulations.

In particular, an FDF spokesman said, the EC needed to set a threshold below which foods would count as GM-free. That was likely to be set well below 1 per cent and Mr Stevens feared it would add to the problems of testing.

"We can test for GM ingredients and say whether they are there or not but it is difficult to say how much is there" he said. "In any case, people who want to avoid GM foods will want to ensure that there is none there, not that it falls below an arbitrary threshold."

Friends of the Earth criticised the regulations for excluding foods that are derived from GM crops but which no longer contain any evidence of it. Examples include oils prepared from soya beans, which contain no proteins, and lecithins (emulsifiers made from soya).

Mr Rooker argues that labelling such foods would be misleading because the accuracy of the labels could never be checked. But consumers who object to GM foods on moral rather than safety grounds, as some do, are unlikely to be satisfied by that awser.

Pete Riley of Friends of the Earth declared that the regulations were worthless because they were "built on sand". Until soya and maize entering the country was segregated into GM and non-GM, he said, more and more foods would contain GM ingredients. "All this means is that UK food manufacturers and hot-dog men will pay the costs imposed on us by unscrupulous multinational corporations."

Firms accused of ignoring fears

By Nigel Hawkes

THE companies behind the genetically modified crop revolution have been accused by a senior government adviser of a "lamentable lack of consideration" for consumer and industry concerns.

Professor John Beringer, chairman of the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment, which advises the Government on whether it is safe to plant GM crops, said in the foreword to committee's annual report that the companies had picked the wrong products to pioneer GM technology and had failed to carry the public with them.

"I am very disappointed that, on the whole, the large biotechnology companies have displayed a lamentable lack of consideration for the feelings of the general public and concerns of the food industries that depend upon the commodity crops that are produced," he wrote. "Distrust of novelty is deeply ingrained in humans. It is incomprehensible to me that some of the first fruits of a new and potentially very frightening technology should have been herbicide tolerant crops and crops carrying genes that confer resistance to important clinical antibiotics.

"While I believe that GM crops on the market presently pose no greater threat to humans and the environment than the traditional varieties from which they are derived, it is not surprising that this view is not taken by many groups that claim to represent public opinion."

In a written submission to the Commons Science and Technology Committee, Professor Beringer accused the European Commission of handling applications to market GM products in an "extraordinarily inefficient way", leading to long delays in getting new processes approved and engendering a "climate in which the public perceives there are serious risks".

Angels are out but Onan is in, says Vatican

Ruth Gledhill and Edward Welsh report on the changes of emphasis in the new Catechism

THE Roman Catholic Church is diluting its belief in the existence of angels and strengthening its opposition to the death penalty. In addition, it says that masturbation need not always be regarded as a sin.

The Vatican has made the changes in the revised edition of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* — the book that sets down the principals of the Roman Catholic religion in a question and answer form.

Because of the growth in "angelology" and its association with New Age beliefs, the Church is reducing its emphasis on the existence of angels. It has ejected some, although not all, from the *Catechism*.

Christian teaching on maturbation has generally emphasised the sinfulness of the practice, and the Vatican maintains that it is "an instrinsically and gravely disordered action". Priests in the confessional often hear tormented Catholics who fear eternal damnation because they believe masturbation to be a mortal sin.

In the revised *Catechism*, while the Church does not endorse masturbation, it argues that psychological factors such as anxiety and maturity reduce moral culpability "to a minimum".

Father Terence Phipps, lecturer in moral theology at Allen Hall, a leading seminary in London, said: "Masturbation has always been regarded as a grave matter." Catholics had often interpeted this to mean it was a mortal sin. He said: said: "There are many factors that reduce culpability and can even take it away completely. There are cases of almost compulsive action in that area. People get very worried because they think it is a mortal sin." The revised edition of the *Catechism* made it "absolutely clear" that it need not be sinful.

When teaching moral theology, he said, he did not lay great emphasis on the story of Onan, who was struck down and slain by God "for spilling his seed on the ground". "It produces scriptural resonances of one touch and a thunderbolt. It is not the mechanical act of spilling the seed that is wrong, but the turning in on oneself."

He added: "The act itself is still regarded as unsatisfactory. But the culpability of the agent is considerably diminished. We are not saying, fine, go ahead and enjoy yourselves. It is still objectively wrong, but subjectively it might not always be sinful."

In another important change that is certain to be controversial, especially in America, the Vatican has deemed that cases where the death penalty can be justified are "practically non-existent". The *Catechism* aroused controversy when it was published in 1994 because of its acknowledgement of the "right and duty of legitimate public authority" to use the death penalty in cases of "extreme gravity". This ruling appeared to be contradicted by the Pope in his encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae*, published a year later.

Now the Vatican has added a mitigating paragraph to its catechetical teaching. It states: "Today, in fact, as a consequence of the possibilities which the state has for effectively preventing crime, by rendering one who has committed an offence incapable of doing harm — without definitively taking away from him the possibility of redeeming himself — the cases in which the execution of the offender is an absolute necessity are very rare, if not practically non-existent."


BRIAN FAIR

Father MacAulay told parishioners he was not likely to return after a study trip abroad

Shand Kydd's priest books into clinic

By Shirley English

THE Roman Catholic priest who comforted Frances Shand Kydd when her daughter, Diana, Princess of Wales, died has been booked into an addiction clinic in the United States.

Father Sean MacAulay, 45, left St Columba's Cathedral in Oban, Argyll, on Wednesday to fly to the St Luke Institute in Maryland, which specialises in treating priests with depression, sexual problems and addictions, including drink problems.

He took over as parish administrator in the wake of the scandal surrounding Roddy Wright, the former Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, who eloped with Kathleen MacPhee, a divorced mother of three, in the summer of 1996. It also emerged that Mr Wright, 58, had a teenage son by an earlier mistress. The former Bishop and Mrs MacPhee, 43, have since married and live in Lancashire.

When the Princess died Mrs Shand Kydd, who lives near by on Seil Island and worships at St Columba's Cathedral, turned to Father MacAulay for support.

She had acted on occasions as his temporary housekeeper. Father MacAulay said at the time: "I turned on the television and saw reports of the accident. I immediately phoned Frances and she just said 'Diana is dead'." In the days that followed he was a regular visitor at her home.

Father MacAulay, a priest for 20 years, told his parishioners at the weekend that he would be leaving to attend a study trip abroad for a month and was unlikely to return.

He said the move had come "quite suddenly" and apologised for any upset he may have caused. Sources said gossip had been circulating in the small fishing village on the West Coast of Scotland for some time about his personal life. He was seen drinking regularly in a local bar. The Church refused to confirm the reports.

Hume urges more trust in teachers

By Ruth Gledhill, Religion Correspondent

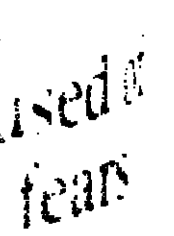
CARDINAL Basil Hume called yesterday for an end to the "constant public pillorying" of teachers. They needed fewer controls and greater trust placed in them, he said.

The Archbishop of Westminster added that pride in the profession and respect for teachers had to be rebuilt. It should be as hard to enter teacher training college as medical school. He cited low pay as a reason why more young people did not enter teaching as a career.

Cardinal Hume told a conference organised by the Teacher Training Agency that the current state of the teaching profession was, along with family instability, a "deep-seated degenerative disease" threatening society's future.

The cardinal said that teaching should be rated with the law and medicine in terms of status and reward. Instead, teachers were often bearing the brunt, along with parents, of a "culture of contempt".

He was speaking as a survey in the *Catholic Herald* shows that many Roman Catholic head teachers are finding it difficult to recruit Catholic teachers to their schools. One head said that the shortage was due to a "lack of Catholics with quality teaching skills".





BARRY BATCHELOR

Malcolm Curnow: blamed surgeon for daughter's death

Families split over blame for heart deaths

By Ian Murray, medical correspondent

SPECTATORS wept in the public gallery yesterday as the leaders of two opposing groups of parents told the Bristol heart surgery inquiry how their daughters died after operations.

Malcolm Curnow, a policeman from Cullumpton, Devon, was convinced after his daughter Verity died that Janardan Dhasmana, a surgeon at Bristol Royal Infirmary, was to blame.

Michelle Cummings, from Bristol, felt that everything had been done for her daughter Charlotte by James Wisheart, the same surgeon who had saved her husband's life 25 years ago.

Mr Curnow, spokesman for the Bristol Heart Children's Action Group, which led the campaign for the inquiry, said that his consent for the operation on his daughter in September, 1990, was fraudulently obtained because he was told by Mr Dhasmana that the procedure was simple, routine and uncomplicated.

He did not know that medical notes said that his nine-month-old daughter was so ill she might need a heart-lung transplant and was horrifed after the operation when he saw his baby ashen-faced and near death in the recovery room.

She died four days later. Mr Dhasmana apologised to him and admitted that there were unexpected complications in carrying out the procedure to replace an artery with a tube.

Mrs Cummings, spokesman for the Bristol Surgeons' Support Group, wept as she told how her daughter died in her arms in February 1989, drowning in her blood as her damaged valves gave out. Charlotte was two years old and had been cared for by Mr Dhasmana and Mr Wisheart.

She described Mr Wisheart as very "gentle and sensitive" and said she believed that he had given her daughter the best possible care.

After Charlotte died, Mrs Cummings met Mr Dhasmana in the corridor: "He gave me a big hug and expressed his sorrow at our loss. He is an incredibly genuine and sensitive man."

Mrs Cummings's husband, Rob, was operated on by Mr Wisheart, who repaired two holes in his heart and enlarged a narrow artery below it. He is now fit and well, and Mrs Cummings said that, without Mr Wisheart, he would not be alive to have fathered her two other children.

The inquiry was set up after the General Medical Council carried out an investigation into the deaths of 29 children at the hospital during operations by the two surgeons.

Both surgeons were censured by the GMC last June for continuing to operate on babies even though they knew that too many were dying. Mr Wisheart was struck off the medical register and Mr Dhasman was suspended from operating on children and lost his job. He is now asking an industrial tribunal to reinstate him.

John Roylance, the chief executive of the hospital, has also been struck off the register for failing to stop the operations. He has appealed against the decision.

The inquiry continues.



Michelle Cummings: felt everything was done for her daughter

Huge rise in claims against family doctors

By Ian Murray

FAMILY doctors are 13 times more likely to be successfully sued by their patients than they were ten years ago and 33 times more likely to face spurious legal action, according to the Medical Protection Society, which represents 45 per cent of GPs in Britain.

In 1989 there were 38 claims against GPs, but last year this figure rose to 500. Over the same period the size of settlements for medical negligence in cases involving GPs rose steeply. The highest settlement in 1989 was £777,000 while last year it was £1,675,000.

Many of the cases are brought on legal aid and later abandoned when it becomes clear there is no case against the GP. The Medical Protection Society has spent almost £7 million over the past five years on cases that were subsequently dropped — money which cannot be recovered.

"The figures show that GPs face an ever growing risk of having to defend themselves against lawsuits," John Hickey, medical director of the society, said. "In addition to those cases which are successfully brought against GPs, we have seen a dramatic rise in the number of failed legal actions."

Nurse tells why she blew whistle

By Michael Horsnell

A NURSE who reported a doctor to police said yesterday that an elderly woman died in his care looking like a victim of Belsen.

Mary Ormerod, 85, a widow who had suffered several strokes, was taken off the high-protein supplement Fresubin on the orders of Ken Taylor. She died 58 days later at Oxford House nursing home, Preston, weighing 3st 12lb. Rachel Towers, an agency nurse, alerted police and the local health authority within hours of laying out the body on August 26, 1995.

Miss Towers told the professional conduct committee of the General Medical Council: "She looked like someone from pictures I have seen of the Holocaust and the thought came to me of Belsen."



Miss Towers yesterday: she went to the police

Miss Towers said that she went to see Mrs Ormerod after care assistants voiced concern. "It was immediately apparent to me that she was emaciated and in a weakened state. I would describe the situation with which I was confronted as unthinkable. I felt that the issue was one of euthanasia and I resolved that I would not have any part in it."

Several nurses are under investigation by their governing body for allegedly breaking their code of practice by failing to comply with a doctor's orders.

Dr Taylor, 51, denies serious professional misconduct. The hearing continues.

Sir Cliff's plea to millennium stars

The singer's call for concerts to aid charity may be too late, report Claudia Joseph and Alex O'Connell

SIR CLIFF RICHARD called on entertainers and the public yesterday to follow his lead and to devote their earnings in the closing hours of the millennium to charity.

Announcing that he is organising a concert in Birmingham on New Year's Eve for Children's Promise, an affiliation of seven children's charities, Sir Cliff said: "I hope that people will not rip this country off because it's the millennium. I don't think we should capitalise on it.

"All I know is that I'm not going to do that. I'm going to do something which is positive. It's good for the nation not everyone is on the take that night."

The pop singer told a press conference at the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham, where he is holding ten concerts in the run-up to the millennium: "I come from a privileged position, I've made a lot of money and I have given a lot away. I intend to continue doing that.

"I am asking people to do something for nothing which is always a tough thing to ask, but there are a lot of good hearts in showbiz and I trust they will be inspired by the show."

It may be too late for Sir Cliff to move some showbiz hearts. Elton John has confirmed a booking in Las Vegas with Tina Turner on the eve of the millennium for an undisclosed sum. Barbra Streisand is said to have made a £13.5 million deal for a concert in the same city on the same night. Tickets will cost £1,250.

David Bowie will perform at a £133 to £199-a-head concert in eastern New Zealand. The venue will be one of the first to see the dawn break on January 1.

Björk is leaving her home in West London for her real home in Iceland, where she will perform in the capital, Reykjavik. The Spice Girls and Robbie Williams are said to have been signed up for a concert in the Millennium Dome, but organisers say they are still arranging the final line-up.

Neil Diamond is forecast to receive £9 million for a millennium concert and the Rolling Stones are expected to receive £6.25 million, although a booking has not been confirmed. Celine Dion is planning a concert in Montreal.

So far the only group to offer a free concert is East 17. The band's members, Terry Coldwell and John Hendy, have pledged a concert if the Government spends the £1.6 billion Millennium Fund on housing the homeless.

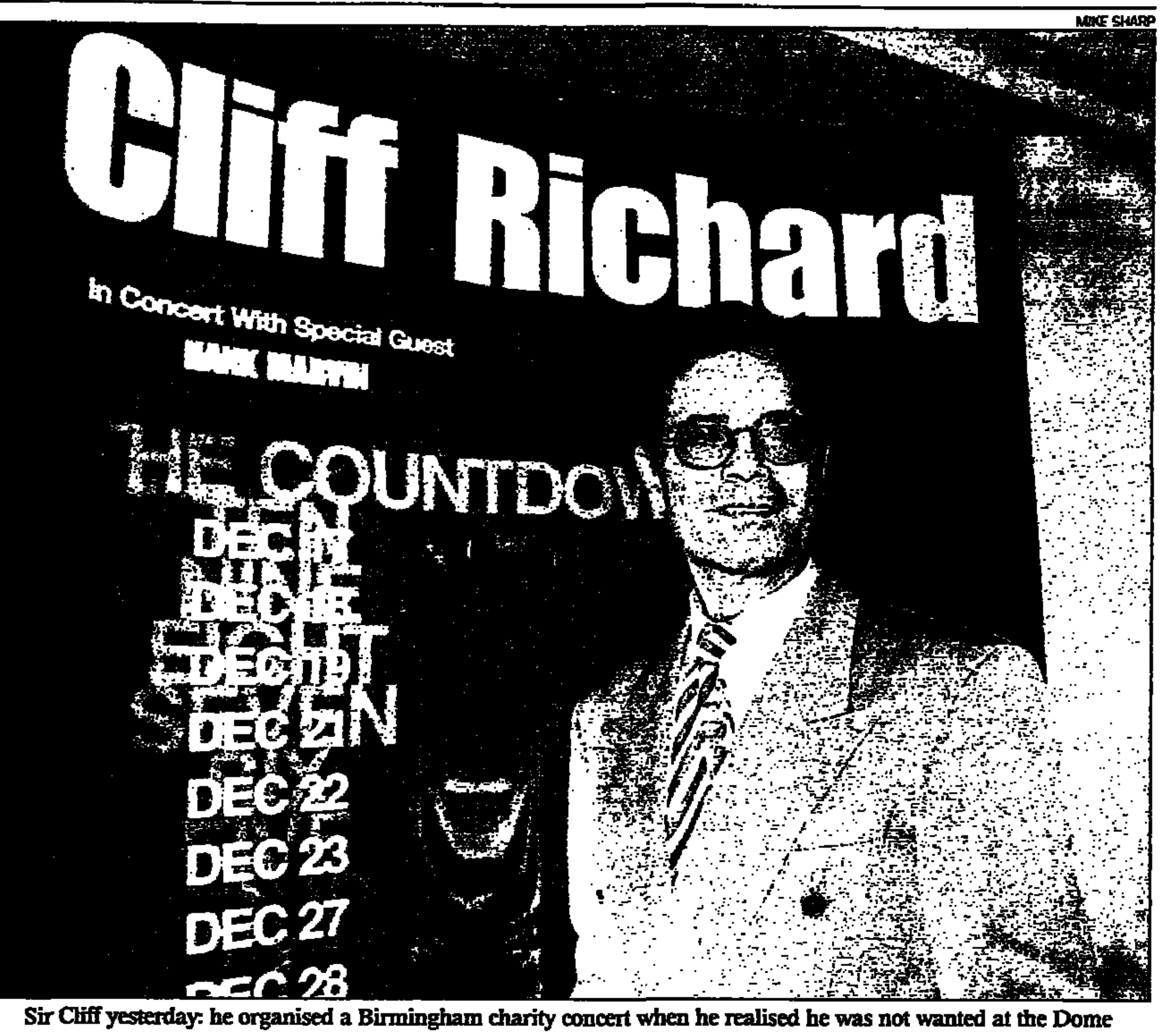
Sir Cliff said that he had hoped to take part in the celebrations at the Dome but had not been invited. He is now holding a concert on December 31 for 13,000 people, with tickets selling at £75 and £100. Hank Marvin will fly in from Australia to appear as a guest.

Sir Cliff said: "I've always jokingly said to my friends that when it comes to the business of passing time, I'm Father Time himself when it comes to pop-rock. I've been around five decades. I thought, if there's a show they're bound to ask me, so I hung on, but now I realise they haven't got anything like that planned anyway. So I thought if they are not going to have one, I shall do one on my own."

By midday yesterday Birmngham arena had sold 50,000 tickets, costing £1.5 million, for his ten concerts. The money to be raised by the millennium concert for Children's Promise is estimated at £1 million.

Tony Blair said: "I wholehearted endorse Sir Cliff's support for this project and should like to thank him for giving so generously of his services and for encouraging others to do likewise."

MIKE SHARP



Sir Cliff yesterday: he organised a Birmingham charity concert when he realised he was not wanted at the Dome

Find in field is jewel linked to King Alfred

By Dalya Alberge, Arts Correspondent

AN EXQUISITE Anglo-Saxon jewel with links to King Alfred, which a metal-detector enthusiast stumbled across in a Wiltshire field, is expected to make more than £300,000 at auction.

David Rylett, 56, a Hampshire builder who had never turned up anything of value in his 19 years of metal-detecting, discovered the mud-encrusted rock crystal of the late 5th or 6th century within a 9th-century gold setting on St Valentine's Day 1977.

The jewel is an aestel or pointer and would have been used to turn the pages of religious manuscripts.



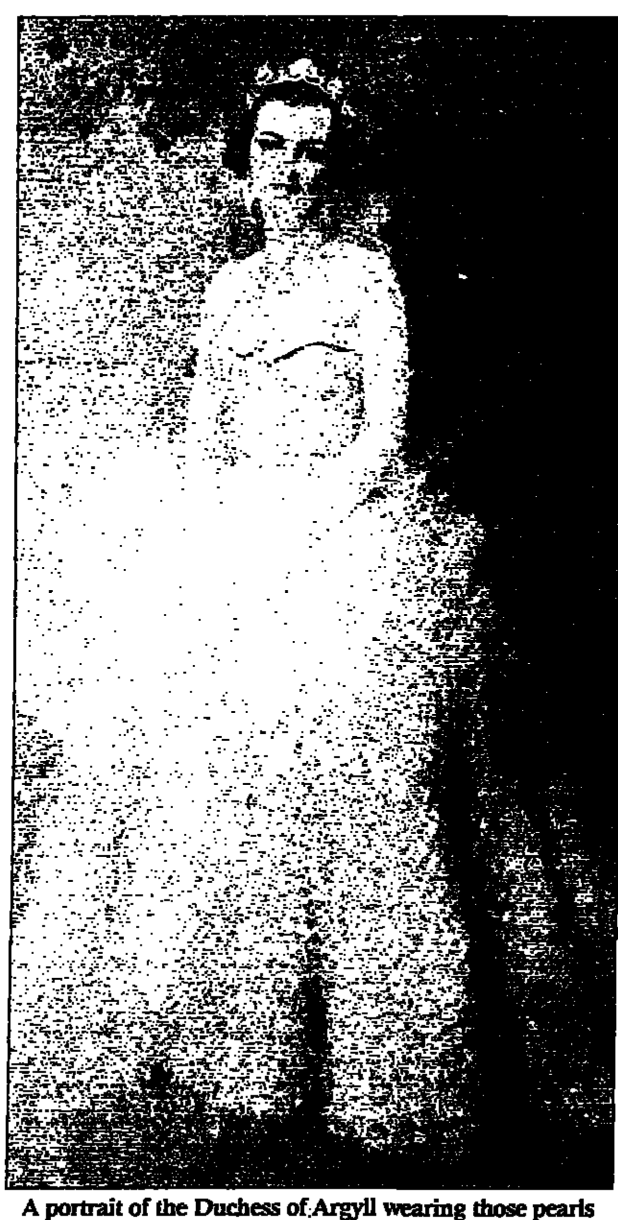
Mr Rylett's find, known as the Wessex Jewel

When he unearthed it Mr Rylett assumed the object was a Victorian fob piece, but decided later to send it to the British Museum. In fact, the aestel is only the fourth of its kind to have been unearthed in Britain; the aestel known as the Alfred Jewel, which bears an inscription "Alfred had me made", is in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. A second is also at Oxford and a third in the British Museum.

Susan Youngs, of the British Museum, explained that it was made up of a gold-crossed frame holding a rock crystal with a blue gem inside and would have held a pointer to turn the pages of manuscripts. It is believed to have been among examples sent out by Alfred during his reign over Wessex.

After a treasure trove inquest in Salisbury, it was decided that the jewel had been abandoned and that Mr Rylett should be granted ownership. He is giving half the proceeds from the sale to the owner of the field. The jewel will be sold by Christie's South Kensington on April 21.

Denning set trap for 'headless man'


A portrait of the Duchess of Argyll wearing those pearls

By Robin Young and Michael Harvey

THE late Lord Denning trapped the infamous "headless man" into revealing his role in the scandalous 1963 divorce of the Duke and Duchess of Argyll, her biographer says today.

Michael Thornton identifies the man in his forthcoming biography of the late duchess, *Argyll versus Argyll*, thus solving one of the century's most lurid mysteries.

The "headless man" featured in a series of photographs that helped the duke to win a divorce. The pictures show the duchess, naked apart from a three-strand string of pearls, and her lover, also naked, in the bathroom of her house in Upper Grosvenor Street, London. She is performing a sex act on him, but the self-set camera has cut off her lover at the neck.

In a letter to *The Times* today, Mr Thornton says that the former Master of the Rolls, who became involved in the case because of its links with his Profumo inquiry, told him of interviewing the main suspect and setting an "ingenious trap". With the help of the police, Denning then established who the headless man was.

Over the years the prime suspect has been the actor Douglas Fairbanks Jr, but other suggestions have included an American businessman and Duncan Sandys, the former senior Conservative minister. The 11th Duke of Argyll suspected more than 80 men of being his wife's lovers.

Mr Thornton says Denning, who died this month at the age of 100, invited him to his home in Hampshire to discuss the case in interviews, which the biographer tape-recorded. Mr Thornton praises Denning's detective skills. "He was more than merely an oustanding judge. He had the razor-sharp mind of a great detective and forensic investigator. These qualities enabled him to set an ingenious trap for the witness in question and, with the help of the police, to establish beyond doubt that he was the man in the photographs.


Suspects: Douglas Fairbanks Jr, left, and Duncan Sandys

"Denning was justifiably proud of this sleuthing and imposed no restrictions upon me with regard to it."

The biographer adds: "Darting about his study with an agility astonishing in a man of 88, he pulled out file after file containing highly sensitive material on which his report was based. It revealed that three Conservative ministers had been involved in the Argyll divorce, and that one had felt obliged to offer his resignation from the Cabinet.

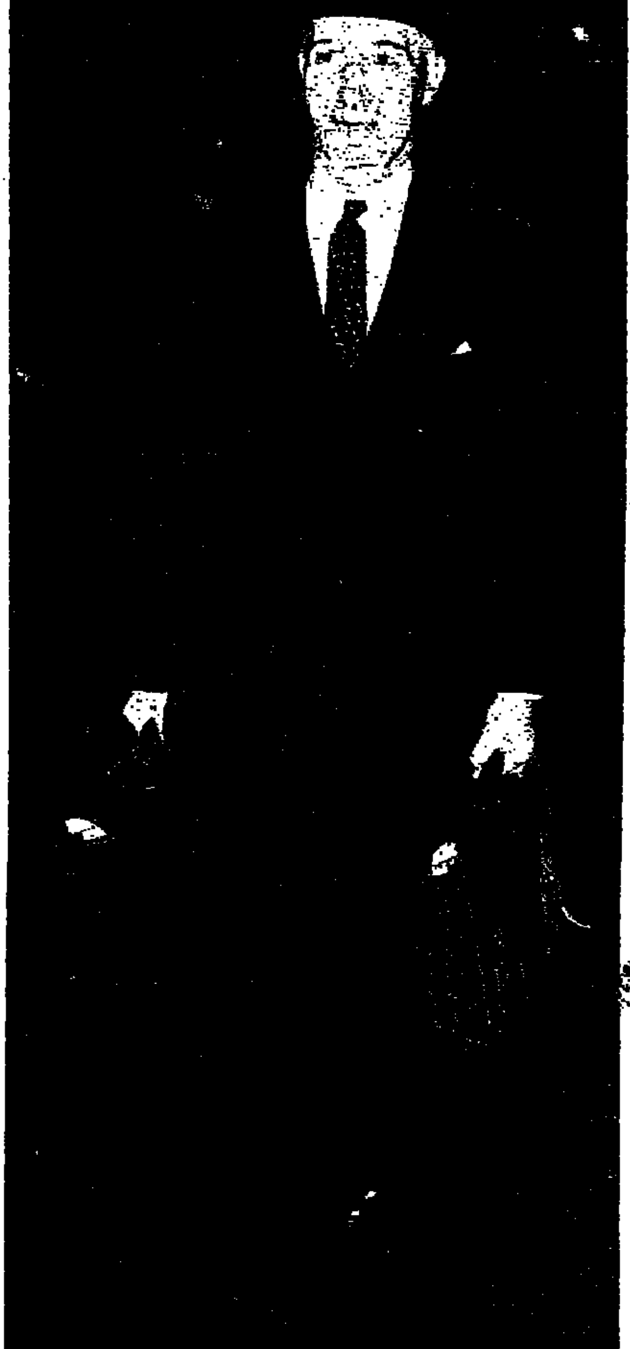
"Lord Denning showed me the detailed forensic material by which this minister had been cleared of being the man in the photographs, as the late Duke of Argyll mistakenly believed him to be.

"The minister had been the duchess's lover, and had paid the duke a sum of money in consideration for not being cited in the divorce action — a fact which Denning, in his report, held to be 'without foundation', but only because no evidence could be found in 1963 to substantiate it. Both the duke and the duchess subsequently admitted it was true."

The headless man is said to be considering legal action to prevent the publication of his name. Mr Thornton has said: "This is somebody who is still living, who is extremely well-known and whom I personally admire and have no wish to persecute, particularly at his age. He has denied it and consistently denies it, but I am sorry to say I have found otherwise."

He emphatically denies any suggestion that Denning asked him not to reveal the man's identity.

Letters, page 23


In 1963 Lord Denning was working on the Profumo inquiry

The duchess's disgrace

THE secrets of the duchess were laid bare in a four-year legal battle that transfixed the nation and became the costliest case the Scottish Bar had known (Michael Harvey writes).

Ethel Margaret Whigham was born in 1912, the only daughter of a wealthy Scottish industrialist. She was voted deb of the year in 1930 and became as famous as a film star, photographed by the press wherever she went.

She first wed the American golfer Charles Sweeney, but the marriage foundered after ten years. In 1951 she married the Duke of Argyll, chief of clan Campbell and hereditary Master of the Royal Household in Scotland. The union could not survive her taste for extramarital affairs, however.

In 1959 he read one of her diaries and, inflamed by its contents, ordered a locksmith to open her writing desk. Inside, with letters and diaries, he found the photographs of the headless man. Wrapped around them were sheets of paper captioned Before, During, Oh! and Finished.

The pictures were taken by a Polaroid camera, which had been launched only in America and had presumably been brought to Britain by the headless man.

The duke began divorce proceedings. The duchess refused meekly to accept her fate and counter-sued. The duke said he would name 88 men as his wife's lovers. In the end he cited four lovers — Baron Sigismund von Braun, a senior German diplomat; John Cohane, an American businessman; Peter Combe, former press officer at the Savoy hotel; and an unnamed man.

The duke was photographed nude to prove he was not the headless man. Duncan Sandys, a former Tory minister, was ruled out because a war wound had left him with scarred legs that were easy to identify.

Eventually the judge, Lord Wheatley, granted the duke a divorce on the ground of the duchess's adultery with Mr Combe. In a devastating 65,000-word judgment, the judge said of the duchess: "She was a highly sexed woman who had ceased to be satisfied with normal relations and had started to indulge in disgusting sexual activities."

She remained part of London society, living for many years in the Grosvenor House Hotel and later in a nursing home in Pimlico, where she died in 1993, aged 80.

Lawyer buried amid anger and accusation

The funeral of Rosemary Nelson was a huge show of nationalist solidarity, writes Martin Fletcher

ROSEMARY NELSON, the murdered human rights lawyer, was buried yesterday after a funeral in Lurgan, Co Armagh, that doubled as a massive demonstration of nationalist anger and solidarity.

The local priest demanded an independent inquiry into Mrs Nelson's death as he addressed thousands of mourners convinced that the police colluded with the loyalist killers of a woman they regarded as their champion.

The Bishop of Dromore, Dr Francis Brooks, used his funeral address to beg for calm at a time of rapidly rising tension in Northern Ireland. Overnight riots near by in Portadown had left 38 police officers and four others slightly injured. A bus was set on fire in the town's Garvaghy Road yesterday evening and the security forces were prepared for more trouble last night.

Mary McAleese, the Irish President, David Andrews, Ireland's Foreign Minister, and Paul Murphy, Northern Ireland's Political Development Minister, attended the funeral. At least three Sinn Fein and nationalist SDLP politicians flew back early from the St Patrick's Day celebrations in Washington to attend.

The English lawyer Gareth Pierce, who has defended several prominent republicans including the Birmingham Six, was there and many legal practices and courts across the province closed out of respect for the murdered solicitor.

One of Mrs Nelson's clients, Brendan McKenna, leader of the nationalist residents of Garvaghy Road, arrived with an eyepatch concealing an injury inflicted by a police officer during the previous night's trouble. The RUC had intervened to separate crowds of nationalists and loyalists outside an Orange hall and were attacked with stones and petrol bombs.



Nelson: "she was the best mother, wife, daughter"

Mrs Nelson's husband, Paul, and her three weeping children led the huge funeral cortège from their home on the edge of Lurgan to St Peter's church. The police remained well out of sight.

They passed the spot where the bomb exploded under Mrs Nelson's BMW moments after she had left for work on Monday and the Tarraghmore primary school, where her daughter, Sarah, 8, was playing when she heard the explosion. The 200 children of the school lined the route and crossed themselves before the hearse.

Black flags and Irish tricolours hung from lampposts. Freshly painted graffiti on the walls proclaimed: "RUC — Armed Wing of Unionism" and "Disband the RUC". There is no evidence to suggest that the RUC colluded with loyalist bombers but the belief has taken firm root among nationalists and the mood of the mourners was one of smouldering anger.

"She stood up for Catholics and nationalists and this is what happened to her. They keep putting down people like her who stand up for our rights," one woman mourner said. "We're sick of it. You think peace is coming and then this happens," another said. There would be no IRA disarmament now — "not unless they disarm the RUC first", a taxi driver said.

Father Kieran McPartlan, the local priest, called Mrs Nelson a tireless worker for human rights and said her murder "struck at the very heart of the legal and justice process". It was "absolutely necessary that an independent inquiry be set up to investigate the circumstances surrounding the appalling death of Rosemary Nelson".

Bishop Brooks begged for calm. "Violent reactions serve only to widen and deepen misery and injustice." As David Trimble and Gerry Adams flew back from Washington with just two weeks left for breaking the deadlock over IRA disarmament, the bishop said everyone's attention had to be focused on the struggling peace process.

Mrs Nelson's sons, Christopher, 13, and Gavin, 11, also spoke briefly at the funeral service. "We her family know her as the best mother, wife, daughter and sister anyone could ever have," Gavin said.

CHRIS HARRIS



Rosemary Nelson's children, Christopher, Sarah and Gavin, follow their mother's coffin with their father, Paul, at the funeral in Lurgan yesterday

Clinton joins call to break Ulster deadlock

By Damian Whitworth in Washington and Martin Fletcher

THE leaders of Britain, America and Ireland issued an extraordinary joint statement last night in which they demanded the deadlock over IRA disarmament be overcome to secure the implementation of the Good Friday peace accord by the anniversary of its signing next month.

The statement came as Northern Ireland's leaders left Washington as entrenched as ever over the crucial issue. "The agreement endorsed by the people last May must be implemented in all its aspects and the remaining difficulties must be resolved ... that is what the people want and we must not fail them," Tony Blair, President Clinton and Bertie Ahern declared.

"More courage will be needed. But we are nearly there. The prize is very great indeed and it is now in sight. We have come too far to go back now. Let us finish the task between now and Good Friday."

After their meetings with Mr Clinton and another meeting with each other, David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist leader, and Gerry Adams, the Sinn Fein president flew home with no agreement on how the issue of decommissioning might be resolved. The Unionists remain adamant that the IRA must start disarming before Sinn Fein can be admitted to government. Gerry Adams insists that is impossible.

"The mood of my meeting with Gerry Adams was very serious," said Mr Trimble. "While nothing was resolved, it was a good talk. I was glad to see that Adams this time was seriously thinking about the issue of decommissioning, rather than just repeating his old script. I feel quite optimistic that, in the end, we will overcome this difficulty, because there really is no alternative." He called the IRA's gradual disarmament and dissolution "a question now not of whether, but when."

Mr Adams, while calling the meeting "cordial", said that Mr Trimble was being unreasonable. "I have to say that he shows no evidence whatsoever of changing his position and he is making demands on me that I cannot deliver."

Mr Adams said that Mr Trimble had demanded that the IRA stage an "event" at which members would display weapons and explosives that they were handing over.

He urged Mr Trimble to meet nationalists in Portadown in a bid to avoid another tense Orange Order standoff in Drumcree. Mr Trimble suggested while in Washington that he would meet the Garvaghy Road residents coalition, who are part of his constituency, if he knew it would "result in a positive outcome."





PAUL BALDESARE

Then and now: children out playing marbles on a street in Leeds, and a child watching television in an age when reading a book is said to be boring, old-fashioned, frustrating and too much of an effort

Prisoners in their bedrooms

Carol Midgley *reports on a study that says media-obsessed children should get out more*

CHILDREN are becoming prisoners of a "bedroom culture" because their parents fear for their safety outside, according to a new study.

They are giving their children more televisions, videos, computers and CD players to use in their bedrooms to compensate for their restricted lifestyles, the London School of Economics report says.

As a result, books are having an increasingly smaller role in children's lives. They prefer to use CD-Roms and the Internet as their sources for information, and television for their narrative. According to the study, books are regarded as "boring, old-fashioned, frustrating and requiring too much effort. Books are not trendy: they are the sort of thing your parents approve of," it says.

Almost a third of parents said their children spent very little or none of their leisure time outside the home. Drugs and crime were cited as their biggest worries. There was a "stark contrast" between their perception of the environment now and when they were young. "Possibly by way of compensation, increasing numbers of children are provided with a rich media environment at home."

The report says that young people do not, in general, feel isolated in their bedrooms. They share their "media lives" with friends and conduct "penpal" relationships over the Internet. Nor could they be termed media addicts. Only 1 per cent of children could be termed heavy users of television or computer games, watching a "worrying" seven hours a day.

Sonia Livingstone, head of the team, which claims to have conducted the most comprehensive survey of media use by children for 40 years, said: "Our research does not support moral panics about children addicted to computer games or mindless entertainment on television, but children need to be screen-wise as well as book-wise. They are developing new skills and need support in this."

Just over two thirds of young people have televisions in their rooms. Among children aged six to seven, half have televisions.

About half of young people have personal computers at home, and a third have television-linked games machines in their bedrooms. "Bedtime might be better termed 'bedroom time', for it marks the end of the family day, rather than the start of sleep," said the study, which was funded by the Advertising Association, the BBC, BT, the Broadcasting Standards Commission, ITV and several European bodies.

More than 1,300 children filled in questionnaires, 32 families gave detailed interviews, and 27 focus groups with young people aged six to 17 provided researchers with information about their television, computer, video, audio and book use.

The study found that British children were much more likely than their European counterparts to be watching television or playing computer games and spent an average five hours a day on media use.

Three quarters of those aged 12 to 14 and four fifths of those aged 15 to 17 said that there was not enough for them to do outside. This was double the number who complained of similar problems in most other European countries.

Watching television was the most popular leisure activity, with an average 2½ hours a day spent in front of the screen. Children said that watching television was "what you do when you are bored and have nothing better to do".

The study said: "The message from children and their parents to policy-makers is clear: improve the provision of safe leisure alternatives for young people, especially teenagers, outside the home."

Girls were less likely to be interested in computers, and only half as likely as boys to have their own PCs. Computer games and software were more often related to sport, a mainly male interest, than the soap operas or narratives girls liked, it said.

"The relative lack of girl-friendly, communication-orientated or narrative-based software is a cause for concern," it said.

Working-class families were less likely to have computers at home, but, if they did, they were more likely to be in the child's room because parents did not use them.

"European comparisons suggest that Britain leads for screen entertainment culture, but lags behind for IT," the study said.

THE NINETIES

Speaking on the telephone is a major part of Chloe Barnes's leisure time (Susie Steiner writes). Like millions of teenagers, she is gripped by the need for long evening discussions with the friends she spends all day with at school. Chloe, 15, from Holland Park, West London, divides her time between the computer, the television and the phone, but feels her existence is anything but solitary. "I get home from school at about 5.45pm, watch *Neighbours* and *Home and Away*, then do my homework until supper," she said.

Homework is largely done on her computer, which is about to be connected to the Internet. "After supper I finish my homework and then speak to my friends on the phone. Depending what's on TV, I'll play on the computer, my PlayStation or listen to music. On weekdays I hardly ever go out, but I have quite a sociable life. I have school all day with my friends and I speak on the phone a lot."

Her bedroom, however, is currently a cause for consternation. "It was done when I was eight so I really hate it," she said. "I want it to be my own personal space." But it does have a hi-fi system and the phone extension is outside her bedroom door. A television, however, has been banned: "I want one, but would never come out of my room."

THE FIFTIES

They were the young ones — cycling gaily down traffic-free streets, jiving at the local hop or gazing at their screen idol on a poster. The fifties teenager, if nostalgia is to be believed, lived in a halcyon era and indulged in wholesome pursuits.

One browse through *The Winter Book for Girls* confirms this view. With chapters on First Steps in Ballroom Dancing, How to Make a Raffia Lampshade and Puppetry as a Hobby, this is the book for young people with time on their hands. The book advises, in a section on Restyle Your Bedroom to Suit Yourself: "To have your own room is never so important as in the instance of You: the teenage girl who is becoming a personality in her own right." Diagrams show a room bursting with climbing plants, neatly ordered cupboards and books propped up with a wireless.

Noreen Marshall, of the Museum of Childhood, said: "This was a transition period from the early 20th century, when people made entertainment at home, like playing cards or singing together. It was considered safe, but then the media was not omnipresent. People think of this mythical time when no one got attacked and there was no child abuse, but that's not true. It was simply not publicised."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Drinker who fell gets £½m

A man who tripped over a kerb after drinking at a social club was awarded £500,000 at the Court of Session in Edinburgh yesterday. Vincent Kemp, 36, fell into the path of a van, receiving fractures to the skull and spine that confine him to a wheelchair.

The judge, Lord Osborne, accepted that it was the design of the kerb that chiefly caused Mr Kemp, of Rosyth, Fife, to stumble. A roads authority ought to foresee that pedestrians might be under the influence of drink, the judge said. However, he reduced the original claim against the Scottish Secretary, who has responsibility for the road, by £250,000 because of Mr Kemp's contributory negligence.

Arson remand

A man accused of murdering seven people in an arson attack was remanded in custody by Stratford Magistrates' Court, East London. An order was made banning identification of the man, from East London, for fear of public disorder. Four generations died in the fire in Chingford on March 6.

Library reopens

The manuscripts, rare books and music reading rooms at the British Library are to reopen on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, even though industrial action by book delivery staff continues. The strike, over pay and working conditions, began on March 8.

Noye appeals

An appeal by Kenneth Noye against extradition from Spain for questioning over the M25 "road rage" murder of Stephen Cameron in May 1996 has gone before 12 judges in Madrid. They are expected to take at least a week to rule on his claims of illegal identification and media prejudice.

Lateral thinking

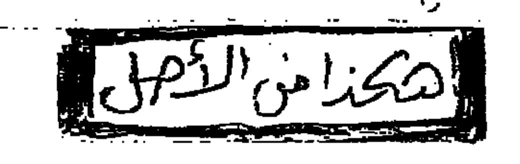
The first bilateral creatures — with a left and right side, rather than being round — were flatworms that lived 500 million years ago, a Spanish team reports in *Science*. By studying genetic variation, they concluded that *Acoela* emerged before the great flowering of life in the Cambrian explosion.

Lucky clubbers

Three unemployed friends turned away from a nightclub in York because they were dressed in T-shirts nipped into a late-night store to buy a cheap shirt each. While there, Sam McKee, 27, Owen Buckle, 20, and Simon Allen, 18, bought a scratchcard and won £20,000.

CORRECTION

In an article (January 17) we wrongly attributed to George Oldham, director of Newcastle's Centre for the Urban Environment, the opinion that architects are "keepers of the keys, not charitable do-gooders". We are happy to make clear that this is not Mr Oldham's view, and apologise for any embarrassment caused.



هكذا من الأصل

Rod Hull falls to death while adjusting aerial

Man Utd reception was poor, writes Richard Duce

ROD HULL, the creator of the puppet Emu, has died in a fall while trying to adjust his television aerial.

He fell from a ladder at his cottage at Winchelsea, East Sussex, on Wednesday night while trying to get a better picture during the football match between Manchester United and Inter Milan.

He will, perhaps, be best remembered for seriously flustering Michael Parkinson in the 1970s when he attacked the chatshow host with the emu. Mr Parkinson said yesterday: "I am very sad to hear of Rod's death. He was a charming, intelligent and sensitive man — quite unlike the emu.

"Emu was the dark side of his personality, and very funny, provided it was not on top of you. He was a gentle man and an endearing companion. We will sorely miss him."

The death of the 63-year-old entertainer, who shared the cottage with his son Oliver, 19, was confirmed by his agent, Laurie Mansfield, who said yesterday: "We are not certain what happened but we know that he was watching the football. The picture was bad and he went up on to the roof to adjust the aerial and fell off."

It was Mr Hull's son who raised the alarm. His father was declared dead at Conquest Hospital in Hastings.

Mr Mansfield said that Mr Hull had recently been to London to talk about summer plans, which included taking Emu on the road again and the possibility of a television comeback. "He was one of the nicest men that I ever met. I've never known him to do a nasty thing."

Mr Hull, who was born in Kent, moved to Australia before returning to Britain in 1970. He enjoyed great success with his emu act until the early 1980s. He decided on a stage career as the best way of curing a boyhood stammer.

He had ambitious plans to renovate Restoration House, the former retreat of Charles II in Rochester, as his family home. However, the purchase of the property in 1991 coincided with a decline in his popularity. The venture was abandoned and he declared himself bankrupt. It meant he could no longer afford to put his two sons through private school.

The financial problems led to the break-up of his marriage to Cher, his second wife. The couple, who had three children, returned to Australia five years ago but the marriage survived only a further four months. Mr Hull again returned to England. He moved into his two-bedroom cottage, rented from the National Trust, five years ago.

At the Queen's Head pub in nearby Icklesham, where he often had a pint and a game of boules, Martin Harris, the landlord, said: "He was a kind, gentle and generous man. He was involved with the community, who are distressed at what has happened.

"Despite his TV image he was a shy man who kept a low profile. That emu never made an appearance at my pub."

In a recent interview Mr Hull, who made the children's programmes *Grottbags* and the *Pink Windmill* in the 1980s, was critical of television producers, saying: "They don't want to spend any money to create what children want."

Philip Davidson, Mr Hull's son-in-law, said: "He lived crazy and died crazy. He liked to live life to the full.

Michael Parkinson falls victim to the irascible Emu on his chat show in the 1970s

Obituary, page 25


Hull with his comic creation. "Emu was the dark side of his personality," said Parkinson

Boy of 6 'exposed himself to girls'

BY A CORRESPONDENT

A BOY of six is being kept under close supervision at school after being accused of "sexually inappropriate behaviour" with female classmates.

Some parents at the school in Enfield, North London, reportedly demanded that the boy should be expelled after he allegedly exposed himself.

However, teaching unions yesterday backed the school and the local education authority, who decided he should be allowed to remain. The school has put an extra teacher on duty during break times to keep the boy under observation, and a spokesman for the council said there had been no repeat of the incidents.

A spokesman for the authority said: "The family concerned has been very co-operative by attending meetings and taking the child home at lunch times. The school is providing additional support and supervision throughout the school day."

A spokesman for the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers said they supported the school's action. "These sort of incidents are very rare. We make a clear distinction between this and violent behaviour."

Police give warning of serial rapist

BY HELEN JOHNSTONE

POLICE have warned women not to walk alone at night in a city where a serial rapist has struck at least three times.

One hundred officers in Southampton are involved in a hunt for the man, who police say is an active, violent, predatory rapist and they fear that he could kill his next victim. Hampshire Police know he has struck three times in the past two years in the city and are linking him to a fourth rape and other sex offences, including an attack on a 14-year-old girl.

A breakthrough in the hunt came when DNA tests established clear evidence that the rapes were carried out by the same man. Police plan to carry out DNA tests on 1,000 men aged between 16 and 35.

Detective Chief Inspector Andy Stewart said: "There has been a serious escalation in the violence this man has used and he is an extremely dangerous person. Ultimately we fear he may murder someone."

The rapist, described as white and aged between 22 and 24, is between 6ft and 6ft 4in tall, of slim to medium build with short, tidy, light brown hair, clean-shaven, with a Southampton accent.

Blair promises to end child poverty within 20 years

But campaigners say Britain could afford to wipe it out in half the time, reports Jill Sherman

TONY BLAIR yesterday said that he wanted to make the welfare state as popular as the NHS as he pledged to wipe out child poverty in Britain within 20 years.

Delivering the Beveridge Lecture at Toynbee Hall in London, the Prime Minister said that public confidence in the welfare state had to be restored in order to convince taxpayers that welfare spending was a good thing.

However, welfare campaigners accused him of being under-ambitious and called on him to abandon tax cuts and spend more money on alleviating hardship. Opposition parties attacked Mr Blair for cynicism and failing to come up with solutions.

"The only road to a popular welfare state is radical welfare reform," Mr Blair said. Part of the way to achieve this was through focusing on children and helping families to get above the breadline, he suggested. Spending on children would rise by more than £6 billion this Parliament while plans announced by Gordon Brown would lift 700,000 children out of poverty in the same period.

"Poverty should not be a birthright. Being poor should not be a life sentence. We need to break the cycle of disadvantage so that children born into poverty are not condemned to social exclusion and deprivation," Mr Blair said.

"And I will set out our historic aim that ours is the first generation to end child poverty for ever, and it will take a generation. It is a 20-year mission but I believe it can be done if we reform the welfare state and build it around the needs of families and children," he said.

The levels of child deprivation were frightening with almost one in three children in Britain living in poverty and poor children more likely to have trouble with education, the police and teenage pregnancy. Increased child benefit, the working families tax credit, improved maternity and paternity rights, the minimum wage and school improvements would help all children, not just the poorest.

However, the Child Poverty Action Group said he should have set a target of ten years and called for an explicit commitment to reducing inequality. "The Government can and should be more ambitious," said Martin Barnes of the action group. "A child born into poverty today may be working and starting their own family by the time the target date of 2019 is reached. We are a very wealthy nation. We can afford to end child poverty in ten years, not 20."

The organisation called on the Government to abandon the planned 1p income tax cut and instead improve social security benefits for families. Child benefit should be increased further and the Government should remove the upper earnings limit on national insurance contributions, which could raise £3.5 billion to invest in employment and improved public services.

The Tories accused the Prime Minister of a cynical attempt to deflect attention from Labour's failure to meet its original pledges on welfare reform. Iain Duncan Smith, the Shadow Social Security Secretary, said: "By introducing a range of anti-family, anti-marriage policies, the Government is going in completely the wrong direction to alleviate child poverty."

The Liberal Democrats said the Mr Blair was right to tackle child poverty but that 20 years too long.

Mr Blair said his Government had already cut by almost 1 per cent a year the real growth of social security spending, and spent £5 billion less than the last administration had planned for.

He praised William, later Lord, Beveridge, the Liberal economist whose 1942 *Report on Social Insurance and Allied Services* paved the way for the welfare state. Mr Blair said it was then associated with progress and achievement, giving people their first pension, a decent home and peace of mind if unemployed.

Mr Blair was welcomed to Toynbee Hall by John Profumo, its president and former War Secretary, and Lord Butler of Brockwell, the Master of University College, Oxford, and former Cabinet Secretary. The lecture was the first in a series marking the 750th anniversary of University College.

Leading article, page 23

PAUL HACKETT/REUTERS



Tony Blair meeting John Profumo, left, president of Toynbee Hall, and Lord Butler before his speech there yesterday

CHANGING DEFINITIONS OF POVERTY

The definition of poverty has changed significantly over the last 60 years from having barely enough to eat to having enough to buy cigarettes and a secondhand television. But relative poverty is still on the rise, and the gap between rich and poor has widened since 1979.

The Government's definition of poverty is half the average household income. A single adult is living in poverty if he or she has an income, after housing costs, of at most £73.50 a week. A couple with no children are in poverty if they earn £133.50 a week while a couple with three children would be on £223.

On these figures, accepted by the Child Poverty Action Group and the Low Pay Unit, more than 14 million people are in poverty, compared with 5 million in 1979. About 4.6 million children are in these households, which Gordon Brown says he will reduce by 700,000 this Parliament.

In 1942 Beveridge stated that: "In considering the minimum income needed by persons of working age for subsistence during the interruption of earnings, it is sufficient to take into account food, clothing, fuel, light and household sundries, and rent."

But two decades earlier Joseph Rowntree, who pioneered work to alleviate poverty, defined it thus: "A family living on the scale allowed for must never spend a penny on railway fare or omnibus . . . They must never purchase a halfpenny newspaper or spend a penny to buy a ticket for a popular concert. They must write no letters to absent children, for they cannot afford to pay the postage. They must never contribute anything to their church or chapel, or give any help to a neighbour which costs them money."

Thatcher challenger saddles up again

By James Landale
Political Correspondent

SIR ANTHONY MEYER, the "stalking-horse" MP who famously but unsuccessfully challenged Margaret Thatcher for the Tory leadership, has joined the breakaway Pro-Euro Conservative Party.

He said the time had come for pro-European Tories to take a stand against the party's Eurosceptic drift. Sir Anthony, who left Parliament in 1992, will campaign and make speeches. But, now 78, he will not stand as a candidate.

His leadership challenge to Mrs Thatcher in November 1989, although widely ridiculed, secured 33 votes and an almost equal number of abstentions. It severely embarrassed the Prime Minister and paved the way for Michael Heseltine's challenge in 1990.

A Tory spokesman said: "The stalking-horse has finally ended up in the knackers' yard."



Meyer: joined breakaway Pro-Euro Conservatives

Queen to open Scots parliament 'in mufti'

By Jason Allardyce
Scottish Political Reporter

A CONSTITUTIONAL row broke yesterday after it emerged that the Queen is to wear everyday clothes to open the Scottish parliament.

Her proposed low-key role in the ceremonial opening on July 1 follows advice from government ministers that the day should be a civic celebration for ordinary people, relatively free from pomp.

She is now unlikely to wear the historic robes of the Order of the Thistle, Scotland's equivalent of the Garter, nor is she likely to be drawn in the Scottish State Coach.

Bernard Crick, Professor Emeritus of Politics at the University of London, gave warning that a civic event would amount to surrendering to nationalists who want unionist sentiments to be suppressed.

The decision follows talks between Scottish Office and Buckingham Palace officials. It rekindled memories of the outrage over the Queen's decision to wear ordinary clothes and carry a handbag during her first Scottish visit after her coronation in 1953.

Cook forestalls 'meddling' by new assemblies

By Valerie Elliott, Whitehall Editor

ROBIN COOK has moved to forestall the devolved national assemblies from meddling in foreign policy and going on junkets around the world.

The Foreign Secretary has also insisted on new ground rules between Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to ensure that the UK continues to speak with one voice in Europe. He and Stephen Byers, the Trade and Industry Secretary, are anxious to prevent "territorial wars" over business and investment, and to control regional inducements to attract new industry.

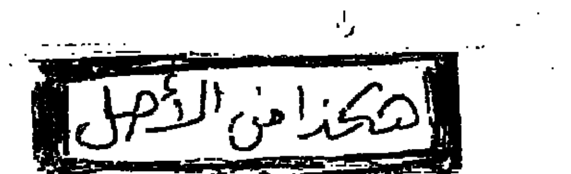
They anticipate the assemblies establishing "national" offices in Brussels to promote their administrations but they do not want freelance operations elsewhere. Even if there are conflicts over forestry, fisheries, or agriculture, the Government is adamant that it will negotiate in Europe for the national interest only. A new structure of joint ministerial committees is to be set up to decide the UK line in advance of key negotiations.

There is no question of Britain splitting its block vote in the EU to take account of a regional interest, although assembly politicians may join Cabinet ministers at meetings.

A concordat to be signed by the regional leaders in May will stipulate that they toe the overall government line with no underhand lobbying that might harm UK interests.

A new Foreign Office unit will liaise with the Scottish parliament and Northern Ireland and Welsh assemblies and help to organise foreign travel. Embassies will be put at the disposal of regional leaders but it is clear Mr Cook does not want them to be used as hotels or for his ambassadors' time to be wasted on petty matters. The unit would also act as "a lightning conductor" if an overseas Government tired of constant visits from the administrations. Officials would block follow-up trips.

The unit will also liaise with governments that wish to visit the new administrations. The Foreign Office is anticipating a glut of requests to visit Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast, with many countries setting up consulate offices there.



Rubella fears grow with fall in vaccination

Experts say an epidemic among babies could have devastating effects, reports Ian Murray

THERE is a growing danger of an epidemic of babies being born with rubella because the proportion of infants being immunised against the disease has been falling for more than four years.

A study published in the *British Medical Journal* today shows that the number of mothers giving birth to children with German measles has started to rise, as has the number of women obtaining an abortion because of exposure to the infection during pregnancy.

The authors, from the Institute of Child Health in London, say that public anxiety about the safety of the vaccine, which also protects against measles and mumps, is responsible for the decline. The largest fall occurred at the start of last year after publication of a report suggesting a possible link between the triple vaccination and autism.

That link has since been discounted by an independent group of experts, but the 6 per cent drop in immunisations, following publication of the report, has not been reversed. The number of children vaccinated by the time they are 16 months old has fallen from 83 per cent to 77 per cent. Before the rubella vaccine was introduced for schoolgirls in 1970, up to 300 babies a year were born in England and Wales with congenital defects associated with the disease. Those include deafness, heart disease, mental handicap, eye disorders, cerebral palsy and bone abnormalities. About a fifth of the babies will die in infancy.

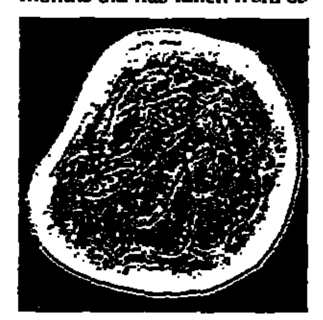
Vaccinations, even though they do not give 100 per cent protection, had an immediate impact. The number of babies born with defects in 1971-75 averaged 48 and there were 742 terminations.

In 1988 the figures started to fall again with the introduction of the triple vaccination for all children under two. By 1991-95 the average number of cases was just four births and nine terminations. A high proportion of those cases was among women who were either immigrants or who had acquired the infection while abroad.

When the decline in vaccinations began, the figures began to rise again and the number of women who became infected in Britain overtook the number of cases among immigrants. In 1996 there were 12 children born with the infection and a similar number of terminations. The increased incidence of cases recorded in the spring of 1996 was concentrated among young men who had never been offered the vaccination because of the perception that the disease was dangerous only to women. The infection spreads easily from person to person in airborne droplets, so an increased incidence among young men puts women at risk.

The authors also found that the number of babies with congenital rubella who had typical heart or eye defects had doubled from 40 per cent to 80 per cent since 1991.

"If high uptake is not maintained, rubella could once again circulate among young children," the report says. "Women and health professionals must be aware of the potentially devastating effects of rubella infection."



The rubella virus: spread in airborne droplets



PAUL COUSANS

Jackie Fletcher blames the vaccination for the disabilities of six-year-old Robert

Mothers insist on the right to refuse jabs

By Ian Murray

JACKIE FLETCHER founded a support group called Jabs — Justice Awareness Basic Support — when her baby son, Robert, became ill and developed autism after being given the triple vaccine against measles, mumps and rubella.

"Robert was developing perfectly at the time of the vaccination," she said. "From then on his life changed. He has had umpteen convulsions and fits. We are not anti-vaccine, but we are anti-damage. We think parents should understand that vaccines are not compulsory and they do have a choice."

More than 1,400 families have joined a claim for damages against the drugs companies that have manufactured the vaccines since 1988.

But Jane Mulholland, whose son Roger was born with congenital rubella syndrome 12 years ago, is dismayed that some parents are choosing not to have their children vaccinated.

"I don't think people who are concerned about the MMR vaccine know quite how devastating the rubella virus can be for the unborn child," she said. "My son has been to hell and back since he was born 12 years ago and the family has been there with him. He was born completely blind and deaf, with brain damage and multiple heart defects."

Doctors working in public health say that, although a small number of children are "victims in the war against disease", the numbers of lives saved and chronic illnesses prevented by immunisation are immensely greater.

Vaccination has eradicated smallpox and almost wiped out polio. Rubella was disappearing until fears arose about the vaccine. To control rubella, more than 85 per cent of the population needs to be immunised for a decade or more. If immunisation drops below that level for any length of time, there is a danger of a new epidemic.

Caution urged over rise in CJD deaths

By Our Medical Correspondent

THE unusually high number of deaths before Christmas from the human version of "mad cow" disease does not mean that a drastic epidemic of the illness is on the way, according to *The Lancet*.

A letter from the Creuzfeldt-Jakob Disease Surveillance Unit in Edinburgh, published in the journal, reports that the number of deaths from the illness jumped to nine in the last quarter of 1998 after a total of six deaths in the previous nine months and 23 in the previous three years.

The letter says that the figures for one quarter need to be interpreted with caution, but do tend to strengthen the evidence that there is increasing mortality from the disease.

"Although the number of deaths in the last quarter of 1998 was unusual, we do not know if this level of mortality will be sustained," the letter says. "The number of CJD deaths during the coming years will provide a clearer indication of whether the apparent increase in deaths towards the end of 1998 was a chance observation or marks a change in the underlying mortality rate."

The journal says in a leading article that the "disquieting" increase in the death rate had been public knowledge for the past two months but nobody seemed to notice.

"Perhaps scientists, doctors and journalists are tired of a topic that since the furore of 1996 seems to have degenerated into political point-scoring," it says. "The outlook from many aspects is grim. In the UK the BSE inquiry will almost certainly publish an anodyne report replete with hand-wringing but conclude no one is to blame. Worldwide, animal feeding practices will continue to be driven by the prospect of quick profit and not by considerations of sound animal husbandry."

The lesson to be learnt is that clinicians have to be highly suspicious in future about unusual diseases and must support a strict surveillance of them when they occur.

☐ British scientists have for the first time reproduced in a test tube the changes that lead to "mad cow" disease and CJD (Nigel Hawkes writes).

CJD and similar diseases are caused by the prion protein — a long string of amino acids linked together — folding up into a different shape. All proteins fold in characteristic ways that determine their properties in the body but in the case of prions a misfolded form can appear.

A team led by Professor John Collinge, of the Imperial College School of Medicine, has shown that breaking a single bond in the prion protein molecule is enough to trigger the change.

The discovery could lead to better tests for CJD and ultimately to drugs able to treat the disease. Isolating the change opened up many new research directions for understanding BSE and CJD, Professor Collinge said.

Maggots clean up in wound care

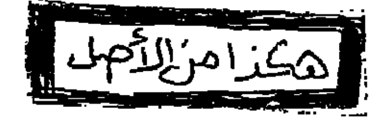
By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

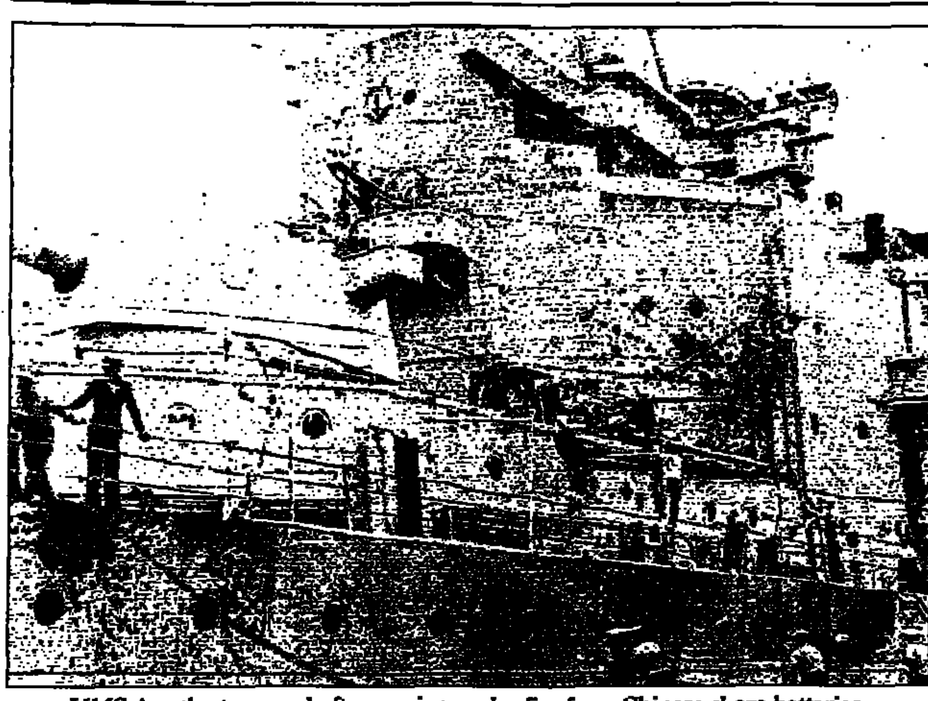
INFECTED wounds are increasingly being treated with sterile maggots of the common greenbottle fly to destroy bacteria that have become resistant to antibiotics.

The biosurgical research unit at the Princess of Wales Hospital in Bridgend, South Wales, is the only supplier of the larvae in Britain. They cost £54 for a pot of 150: so far more than 5,000 pots have been sold.

"They are cost-effective because they both kill the bacteria and clean the wound," Steve Thomas, director of the unit, said. "They are only available privately, but they should be made available on prescription because they would save the NHS a great deal of money. We have cured patients in days who have been in hospital on antibiotics for weeks."

Writing in the *British Medical Journal* today, he says that the maggots are useful in the treatment of all types of wounds.





HMS Amethyst, scarred after coming under fire from Chinese shore batteries

Old foes salute frigate's escape from Yangtze



Officers and men from ships shelled on the Yangtze march down Fleet Street in London on their way to a civic luncheon at Guildhall

Fifty years on, memories of a dash to freedom live on, writes Michael Evans

THE courageous exploit of *HMS Amethyst*, the frigate which got caught up in China's civil war between the Communists and Nationalists in 1949 while steaming down the Yangtze River, remains one of the most heroic events of Royal Navy history.

Her ambush by Communist guns, the loss of 17 of the crew members, including the captain, and her subsequent dash for freedom down the Yangtze after three months at anchor while the war raged around them, have never been forgotten.

Yesterday's wreath-laying in the Yangtze by Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, the First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff, along with a senior Chinese admiral, served to show that nearly 50 years after the event, the memories of it still linger for both British and Chinese.

It was on April 19, 1949 that the 1,490-tonne frigate, with a complement of 192 officers and men commanded by Lieutenant Commander Bernard Skinner, was ordered to leave Shanghai and to sail 180 miles up the Yangtze River to Nanking, the seat of Chiang Kaishek's Nationalist Government, to relieve the destroyer, *HMS Consort*, as guardship to the British Embassy.

The order came as the Chinese Communists north of the Yangtze River and the Nationalist forces to the south were engaged in bitter fighting. *HMS Amethyst*, engaged in a peaceful mission, came under fierce attack from the Communist shore batteries.

Lieutenant Commander Skinner was seriously injured and subsequently died. Three other Royal Navy warships, *HMS Consort*, *HMS London* and *HMS Black Swan*, steamed to the rescue but were also shelled, with serious loss of life.

The crippled *Amethyst* ran aground on Rose Island but the crew managed to refloat her and proceeded a few miles upriver, first to an anchorage off Chang Sang Chau Island and later to the Ta Sha South Channel.

It was at this stage that 33-year-old Lieutenant Commander John Kerans, assistant naval attaché at the embassy in Nanking, arrived on the frigate to take over command.

There followed 100 days of negotiations with the Communists to let the frigate go. But every time the warship tried to move its moorings, it was fired on by shore-based artillery.

Conditions deteriorated. The men went on half-rations and there was a plague of rats against which the ship's cat, Simon, fought daily battles. Although the world had been outraged by the fate of the *Amethyst*, she remained trapped for so long that she had almost been forgotten by the public.

However, the Admiralty was becoming increasingly worried about the shortage of food and medical supplies on the frigate. The Chinese Communists were also showing no sign of giving the ship and its crew their freedom. Admiral Sir Patrick Brind, Commander-in-Chief Far East Station, decided that escape by night was the only solution. It was a desperate gamble. The *Amethyst* slipped her cable at 10.12pm on a Saturday night, July 31, 1949. The frigate soon came under heavy artillery and machinegun fire from four shore batteries. The *Amethyst* overcame more than 140 miles of navigational hazards on a river noted for being one of the trickiest in the world and on a pitch dark night, before successfully reaching the open sea.

On learning of the escape, the naval authorities said: "The outstanding feature of this operation was the skill with which it was planned and the determination with which it was conducted. The timing was a vital factor. The *Amethyst* hardly had enough speed to slip after dark and to pass the Woosung forts by dawn."

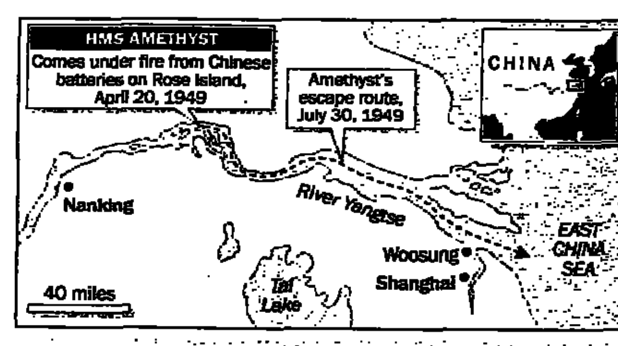
The statement went on: "Having negotiated varying currents, sandbanks, and sharp turns during the 140-mile passage, she arrived with only nine tonnes of fuel remaining."

The *Amethyst* had been held hostage by the Chinese Communists since April 20 and the crew had been on half-rations since the beginning of July. The first signal she sent on meeting up with *HMS Consort* read: "Have rejoined the fleet south of Woosung. No damage or casualties. God Save the King."

Lieutenant Commander Kerans was awarded the Distinguished Service Order and there were numerous other bravery awards for the crew. The ship returned to Plymouth to an ecstatic welcome. Lieutenant-Commander Kerans was promoted to commander and retired in 1958, later becoming a Tory MP. He died in 1985.

LINKS

http://www.netcomuk.co.uk/~swalton/navy/rn-cr4.html — British ships built between 1928 and 1946.
http://www.iwm.org.uk/ — The Imperial War Museum.
http://www.gsprint.com/cusd/army.htm — The People's Liberation Army.



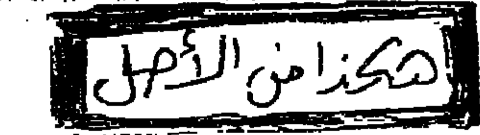
BRITISH WARSHIPS SHELLED ON YANGTZE

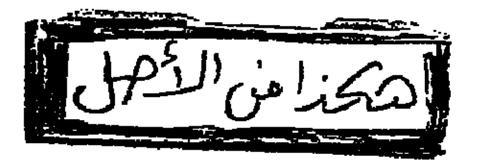
OVER 70 CASUALTIES REPORTED

The British sloop H.M.S. Amethyst was fired on by Communist field artillery while on her way up the Yangtze yesterday with supplies for the British Embassy at Nanking. The destroyer H.M.S. Consort ... also came under heavy fire,

The 1949 report in *The Times* of the *Amethyst*'s mission and Simon the cat, decorated for his battle with rats







Italian sex pests get the go-ahead — as long as they are in love


Mussolini: said ruling echoed Middle Ages

Feminists decry 'molester's charter', writes Richard Owen in Rome

ITALIAN feminists yesterday reacted with fury to a court ruling that a man who makes unwanted advances to his female staff cannot be charged with sexual harassment as long as he is "genuinely in love with the object of his affections".

A court in Como dismissed a claim for compensation by a 34-year-old secretary who said she had been forced to leave the engineering firm she worked for because her boss's sexual advances had become intolerable and had made her ill.

The woman, who was unnamed, said she joined the firm as secretary to the managing director in November 1997, but six months later had complained to her trade union that he was persistently "kissing me, hugging me and groping me".

When the harassment continued, she first went on five months' sick leave, and then resigned. She subsequently sued the company for failing to award her severance pay.

When challenged in court, the managing director — who was also not named — argued successfully that he had been in love with the woman and had "lost his head".

The Como judges accepted his version of events and threw out the case, a decision dubbed yesterday a "charter for lecherous bosses" by the Italian press.

"This is more reminiscent of the Middle Ages than the eve of the third millennium," said Alessandra Mussolini, the granddaughter of Italy's Fascist dictator, Benito Mussolini, and far-right MP for Naples, who campaigns for women's rights.

Last month Signora Mussolini was at the forefront of protests when the Italian appeal court ruled that a woman cannot be raped if she is wearing tight denim jeans, since their removal requires "a measure of co-operation and consent". The court overturned the conviction of a driving instructor for raping an 18-year-old student who had worn jeans.

Signora Mussolini said the Como ruling was a step backwards, and meant that "we might as well go back to the time when killing an adulterous wife was pardoned as a crime of honour".

She added: "Even a maniac can claim he has fallen in love. And in any case, how on earth can judges decide who is in love and who is not?"

Grazia Villa, the lawyer for the secretary, said that her client had left the company because she "could not stand the atmosphere in the office any longer ... any woman will understand this."

The manager argued that the woman had "not resigned for any just or valid reason". Vittorio Anghileri, the presiding judge, said police had interviewed both the man and the woman. There had clearly been "a romantic relationship, at least on the part of the accused man, if not of the object of his desire", the judge said.

He noted that there were no witnesses to the alleged harassment, and no physical evidence on the woman's body to show that she had been molested.

But Signora Villa said the court had set a "dangerous precedent for future cases of sexual harassment ... In future a molester will be able to get way with anything as long as he claims to be in love.

"We have now reached a situation where women not only have to be very careful about what they wear, they also have to worry about the feelings — or supposed feelings — of those who force their attentions on them."

She said it was difficult to prove cases of this kind because the law in Italy was still "a masculine instrument".

"We have to change the culture within which the law operates, and then change the law itself," Signora Villa said.

Auditors fire off counterblast at defiant Santer

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

MEMBERS of the independent inquiry that brought down the European Commission yesterday attacked Jacques Santer, the Commission's President, and his team for rejecting their verdict and accused some commissioners of hindering their investigation.

Mr Santer, meanwhile, said he had no intention of leaving office for weeks and would attend next week's Berlin European Union summit despite the collective resignation of his team on Monday.

The Commission rejected arguments that the Treaty of Maastricht ruled out the reappointment of commissioners who had resigned. A strict reading of the treaty suggests this, but British officials insisted that outgoing commissioners could be immediately sent back to Brussels, as the Government plans to do with Sir Leon Brittan and Neil Kinnock.

The Commission also confirmed yesterday that the outgoing members were entitled to about half their £130,000 salaries for each of the next three years to help them to make the transition to other careers. The commissioners also keep pension rights, equivalent to 4.5 per cent of their last salary multiplied by their number of years in office.

In the meantime, the commissioners continue to receive their full salaries as long as they remain in their caretaker roles. The arrangements, standard for departing top Eurocrats, have been attacked by Tony Blair and other European politicians. Officials said, however, that there could be no question of depriving them of the golden handshakes or pensions, since the only grounds for such action would have been if they had been dismissed.

The counterblast from the outside auditors fuelled resentment inside the Brussels executive towards a second, more detailed inquiry into abuses by its senior management that is due to start this month. Some officials said the public attacks from the senior legal figures reinforced their view that the so-called "wise persons" inquiry had been pursuing a political agenda.

Andre Middelhoek, the Dutchman who headed the inquiry, said the committee's conclusion on the Commission's failure of management had been amply justified by its investigation. Mr Santer's rejection of the verdict on Tuesday must have been due to emotion, he said. "I cannot otherwise explain how the Commission could have so misconstrued our conclusions."

Mr Middelhoek, a former chief of the EU's Court of Auditors, also said some of the commissioners interviewed by his team had been unwilling to pass on information on their colleagues. "The commissioners should look beyond their garden fences and take out the weeds in their neighbours' gardens," Mr Middelhoek told a Dutch newspaper.

Walter Van Gerven, the Belgian member of the team, also attacked Mr Santer's stand, but the sharpest riposte came from Pierre Lelong, the French member. "If [Mr Santer] thinks that, then he has not understood anything that has happened," he said.

The broadside from the auditors stirred the ire of commissioners and senior officials, who see a political motive behind the auditors' actions. Some officials questioned Mr Middelhoek's neutrality, given his battle with the Commission over its annual accounts when he headed the EU financial watchdog. "Some people think he is trying to teach the Commission lessons that it didn't learn when he was with the Court of Auditors," said a Commission source.

Martine Reicherts, the spokeswoman for Mr Santer, denied rumours that senior officials were now planning to withhold co-operation with the inquiry when it starts its second phase.

PACO CAMPOS / EPA


Gerhard Schröder, left, at a press conference in Madrid after meeting José María Aznar, the Spanish Prime Minister, to discuss the Brussels crisis

'Favourite' Prodi waits in wings

Rome: Professor Romano Prodi, the former Italian Prime Minister who has emerged as front-runner for the presidency of the European Commission, yesterday laid down his conditions for accepting the job (Richard Owen writes).

He told friends and advisers that he was not prepared to serve as an interim President, and that he had to have a "full mandate" with the full backing of all European Union states.

He also indicated that he hoped to remain active in Italian politics, continuing to guide the small centre-left party he founded last month after being ousted as Italian leader. But a spokesman for the Commission was quoted by Ansa, the Italian news agency, as saying that any head of the Commission could not at the same time "continue to be head of a political party".

Signor Prodi, widely admired for his integrity and his skill in guiding Italy into the euro, said no offer had been made as yet. He was "one of several possible candidates".

Told that he was the favourite so far, he replied with a broad smile: "Only in the Italian newspapers".

Sex tape lays bare battle in the Kremlin

Prosecutor and prostitutes saga weakens Yeltsin, Anna Blundy in Moscow writes

INSOMNIACS across Russia raised an eyebrow early yesterday as they watched grainy black and white footage of Yuri Skuratov, the Prosecutor-General and a married man, cavorting naked across their television screens with two young women.

The decision to air the footage is thought to have been taken by President Yeltsin himself. The President was lashing out at the Federation Council, Russia's upper house of parliament, which had humiliated him in refusing to accept Mr Skuratov's resignation.

The release of the videotape was yet another move in a complex power struggle between the ailing Mr Yeltsin and Yevgeni Primakov, his increasingly popular Prime Minister.

The tale of the prosecutor and the prostitutes has failed to produce outrage among the cynical Russian people, long used to a staple diet of sex scandals and political intrigue. As to the explicit content of the tape itself, it was nothing compared to the routine sex and violence that is Russian television's nightly fare.

The affair has left the embarrassed prosecutor and the angry President battling for what moral high ground remains. Mr Skuratov claims the footage used to blackmail him into resigning last month was obtained illegally.

There was no secret as to who he thought was behind the blackmail — the man the Russians love to hate and that stalwart of Kremlin intrigue, Boris Berezovsky. Everybody knows that Mr Primakov has been embroiled in a bitter conflict with Mr Berezovsky, a friend of the Yeltsin family. The Prime Minister had ordered investigations into Mr Berezovsky's business dealings and Mr Skuratov mentioned many Berezovsky-related companies as he pleaded for the Federation Council's mercy on Wednesday.

In turn, Mr Yeltsin accused Mr Skuratov of immorality, saying via a spokesman that "only morally untainted persons can combat crime".

He is thought to have allowed the compromising videotapes to be aired in an attempt to prove his point. A spate of vengeful sackings within the presidential administration is now anticipated, with Nikolai Bordyuzha, the Chief of Staff, and Oleg Sisuyev, his deputy, looking the most vulnerable. The markets are also expected to react, with the rouble plummeting further against the dollar.

The President, irretrievably weakened by the defiance of the Federation Council and the prosecutor, left hospital for his residence, Gorky-9, yesterday. The energetic Prosecutor-General had blatantly defied Mr Yeltsin and baffled observers by arriving for work last week without warning after nearly a month's absence.

The sordid affair has neither shocked ordinary Russians nor damaged Mr Skuratov's reputation, for this kind of scandal is usually met with grudging respect. President Clinton's popularity ratings soared in Russia with the news of his affair with Monica Lewinsky.

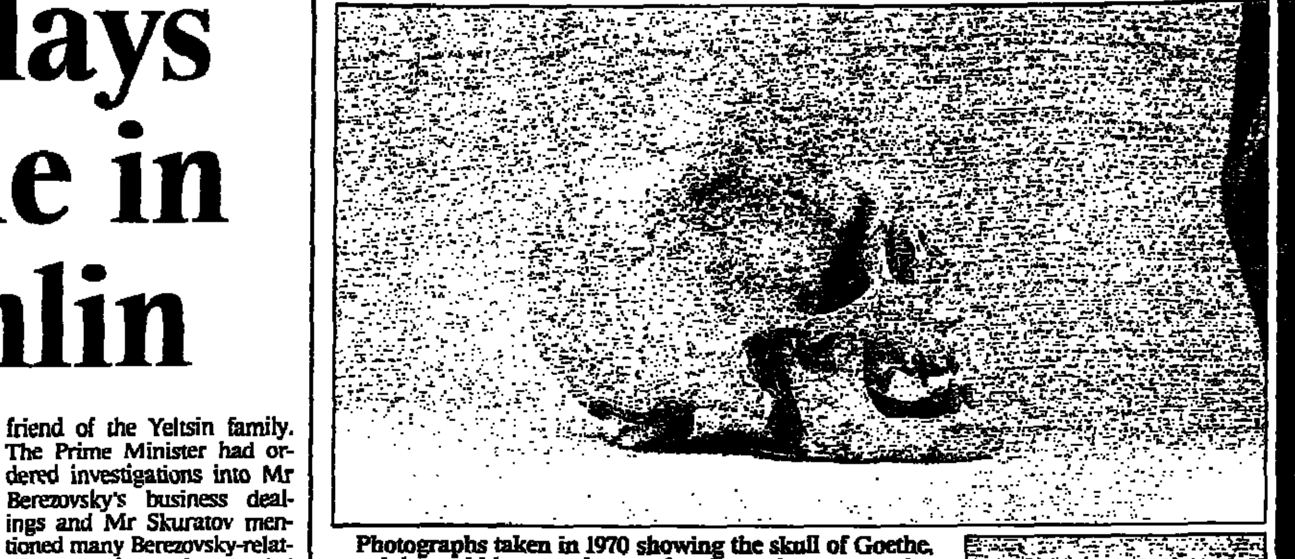
Ironically, the sex scandal has erupted on the very day Patriarch Aleksei II condemned the glut of sex and violence that dominates Russian television. "Such a situation destroys spirituality and harmony in society," he said.

The Communist-dominated Duma last week passed a censorship Bill aimed at ridding the media of the violence and pornography that has saturated it in recent years. Mr Yeltsin has promised to veto the Bill.

Leading article, page 23



Yuri Skuratov, involved in a sex scandal with political fallout, at a concert in Moscow with his wife, Yelena



AP

Photographs taken in 1970 showing the skull of Goethe, right, and his sarcophagus after the tomb was opened

Goethe's tomb was raided by East Germans

FROM TONY PATERSON IN BERLIN

EAST GERMAN scientists raided Goethe's tomb in a nocturnal cloak-and-dagger operation intended to retrieve the remains of the 18th-century writer for posterity, Weimar officials said yesterday.

The city's Classics Foundation said the hitherto unreported exhumation was carried out nearly 30 years ago. In November 1970, seven East German scientists used the pretext of a defective lock on the dead poet's sarcophagus to open the tomb, located in a special burial vault on the outskirts of the city.

"There was no secret about it, but the matter was handled with the utmost discretion," said Jürgen Seifert, the Weimar foundation's president. The subsequent removal of Goethe's remains was carried out at dead of night to avoid exposing the then Communist state to charges of desecration.

The scientists found the poet's remains in an advanced state of decay. The contents of the sarcophagus were taken by handcart to the city's National Museum.

Goethe's skeleton was cleaned and placed on a bed of foam rubber and then returned, again at night, to the burial vault three weeks later.

A detailed report and seven roles of film documenting the exhumation were stored in the anatomical collection in Weimar's National Museum before they were found recently.

They showed that a crown of laurel leaves on Goethe's skull had been reinforced with plastic, a city spokesman said.

The discovery is potentially embarrassing for Weimar. The city is trying to polish its image as this year's European city of culture and will host the celebrations marking the 250th anniversary of Goethe's birth later this year.

A spokeswoman for the Weimar Classics Foundation yesterday dismissed suggestions that the removal of the poet's remains could be construed as desecration.

"It was simply an attempt to preserve the remains for posterity," she said.

But she added: "The way it was handled was typical of how such things were done in those days."

Serb troops 'ready for martyrdom'

Milosevic is given new ultimatum on airstrikes as Kosovo peace talks stall, writes Tom Walker in Belgrade

AS THE Kosovo peace talks ground to a halt in Paris yesterday and the Serbs were issued with a fresh ultimatum to accept Nato peacekeepers in Kosovo or face airstrikes, the Yugoslav Army said it was preparing counter-attacks against Nato targets in the neighbouring Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and in the Adriatic.

Defence analysts close to the military hierarchy in Belgrade said the army was prepared for a do-or-die stand, and was confident that newly-acquired Russian anti-aircraft systems would help the large but cash-strapped force to repulse an initial wave of Nato airstrikes.

Officials at the stalled talks said those could begin late next week if the Serb delegation fails to agree to the peace plan by a revised deadline of Wednesday. The Albanian delegation signed the Contact Group document last night.

"It is the orientation of the Yugoslav Army's supreme commander and the military leadership and primarily that of our people that Kosovo-Metohija must be defended at all costs," said General Nebojsa Pavkovic, commander of the Yugoslav Third Army in Kosovo. The overall army chief, Dragoljub Ojdanic, told military cadets to "prepare for martyrdom in the service of the fatherland". Nearly 93 per cent of Serbs questioned in a poll backed the generals, and said the army should hit back at Nato targets where possible.

"I am sure the army will not remain passive," said Miroslav Lazanski, a respected military analyst with the pro-regime newspaper *Vecernje Nevosti*. He said senior commanders had outlined a list of potential targets, including the new Nato headquarters of Kumanovo in northern Macedonia, along with more established sites in eastern Bosnia.

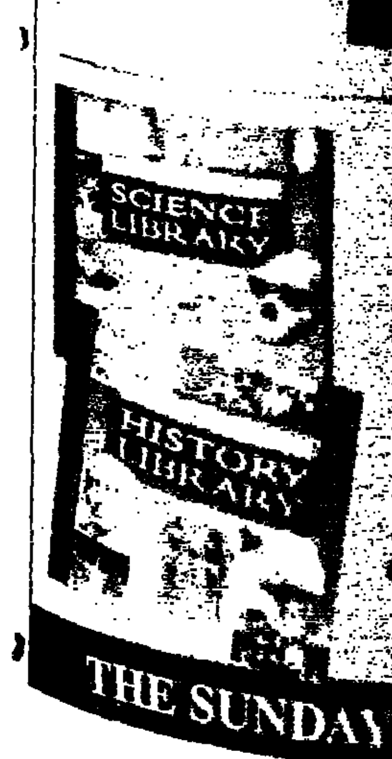
The Yugoslav Army's fleet of MiG 29 fighters, he said, was prepared for sorties against Nato warships in the Adriatic, which could also be attacked from missile sites in Montenegro.

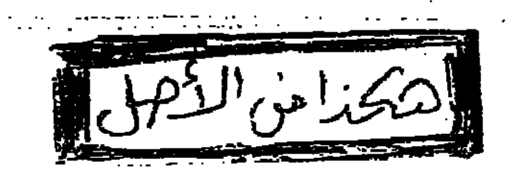
The bellicose rhetoric runs contrary to the more widely accepted scenario that President Milosevic of Yugoslavia will allow Nato to execute pinprick strikes against unmanned and moribund military targets before throwing in the towel and allowing peacekeepers into Kosovo.

Which option he chooses may well depend on public opinion, and the personal danger he feels from radicals like the Deputy Prime Minister Vojislav Seselj, who advocates war with Nato.

Serbia's one wavering supporter in the Contact Group, Russia, was yesterday still trying to persuade its Western partners to approach airstrikes with great caution.

"If events take a military turn in Kosovo, it will spread to neighbouring states, and the Balkans as a whole will catch fire," said the Russian Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, in Moscow.





Egypt seeks to scotch organs for sale claim

From Christopher Walker in Cairo

EGYPT'S political, legal and medical establishment moved with rare alacrity yesterday to try to scotch allegations by Nile Delta MPs that 25 children had been sold to private hospitals — then murdered for their body parts.

Al Akbar, one of Cairo's two leading semi-official dailies, carried a front-page story claiming that an official investigation that opened this week had "proved" the allegations untrue. The paper devoted a page to its own investigation into what one headline described as claims that a foundlings' home in [the governate of] Menoufieh had been turned into an abattoir.

The story included photographs of the death certificates of four alleged victims of a trade in human organs that the ten MPs claimed had taken place over three months. The certificates showed various natural causes of death.

A doctor at the educational hospital in the town of Shibeen Al-Qom, 36 miles north of Cairo and the alleged centre of the organ market, said: "There is no doubt that children in the two institutions lived in appalling and squalid conditions, but there is not yet a shred of evidence I have seen that they died because their organs were being pirated."

Both institutions at the heart of the case, now under an investigation ordered by Ragaa el-Arabi, the general prosecutor, were closed late last year after repeated allegations of neglect, ill treatment and financial mismanagement by their separate administrators, a husband and wife team. The boards overseeing the institutions have been closed and the remaining 46 children moved to the town's third orphanage.

Bahiga Haman, its new head, said: "We took over on February 27 after a decision to get rid of the former management. The children were very sick and in bad shape. No blankets, no medical care. Most of the children are mentally handicapped."

> ‘Newspaper headlines speak of a foundlings' home being turned into an abattoir’

The MPs who made the allegations had by last night failed to provide detailed backing for their claims, which centred mainly on the alleged proximity of the numbers on death certificates over a short period, which raised suspicions that they had been forged to cover wrongdoing.

Hana Abu-Khatira, one of the first Egyptian journalists to investigate, told *The Times*: "The main feeling among doctors at the hospital and Social Affairs Ministry officials who have already investigated these claims is that they are part of a political game being fought out in the Menoufieh district."

Ms Abu-Khatira added that doctors said many of the dead children were too young for their organs to be marketable.

Adli Hussein, the local governor, was one of the first to deny the allegations. He was responsible for dissolving the boards of both institutions in November and December because of irregularities.

The allegations caught the public imagination because there are repeated rumours in Egypt — both of poor boys and girls being sold into prostitution to rich Gulf Arabs, and of organ markets run via coded newspaper advertisements.

"In a society where children's arms and legs are broken by their own parents to make them better street beggars, such stories [of organ markets] cannot be quickly dismissed," said one Cairo doctor. "But in this case, as of today, the facts to back up allegations of the systematic sale of so far unidentified organs of foundlings are still missing."





Some of an estimated 18,000 Iraqi pilgrims — many without food or money — gathered on Saudi border in preparation for the Haj to Mecca. They plan to cross the frontier in defiance of United Nations sanctions which restrict travel. Saudi officials have refused to say whether they will allow them to cross the border. It is a sacred duty for every Muslim to make the journey to the Prophet Muhammad's birthplace once in their lifetime

Iraq on the way to making nuclear weapons

From Ben Macintyre in Washington

PRESIDENT Saddam Hussein of Iraq may be on the verge of producing a workable nuclear weapon, according to a report citing hitherto unpublished evidence from an Iraqi nuclear scientist who worked for a decade on the secret nuclear weapons programme before defecting.

United Nations weapons inspectors believe that a plant west of Baghdad, which the Iraqis say is a tractor factory, is designed to manufacture enriched uranium for nuclear bombs, and "there is mounting evidence that Iraq may be assembling a secret nuclear reactor to generate plutonium", according to yesterday's *Wall Street Journal*.

Airstrikes by US and British warplanes are continuing in Iraq almost daily. But after the withdrawal of UN inspectors last December, there are increasing fears that Saddam is in a position to resume a fast-track programme to make nuclear weapons.

"Either the uranium or plutonium could provide Saddam with what he needs to build a bomb, and much sooner than many in the West think," the report said.

Information about both secret weapons programmes was passed to American officials more than four years ago, but never made available to the UN Special Commission for the Disarmament of Iraq, the report claimed.

Operation Desert Fox did little damage to the plants where Iraq's nuclear equipment is thought to be stored, and with the end of UN inspections Saddam may have begun rebuilding his nuclear production capability.

"If Iraq had access to nuclear material, it could produce a workable nuclear weapon within one year," a senior official at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna was quoted as saying.

UN weapons inspectors are particularly concerned by the "tractor factory" at al-Ubur. The plant contains a high-voltage power source and a plant for water purification, two of the facilities necessary for operating the particle accelerators used by Iraq to enrich uranium before the Gulf War. The technique is obsolete in the West but remains an effective method. "We are worried what the Iraqis can do in this facility," one weapons inspector said. The report is supported by documents obtained through the Iraqi opposition group, Iraqi National Congress, and provided by a nuclear technician who defected in early 1994.

Black Islamic leader ‘close to death’

From Damian Whitworth in Washington

LOUIS FARRAKHAN, the fiery and controversial leader of the Nation of Islam, is close to death. He is suffering from prostate cancer, but some of his followers suggest that he has been poisoned by the US Government.

According to a report in the minister's own newspaper, *The Final Call*, he has been gravely ill since earlier this year. "My Brother is struggling to overcome the forces of death," said Jabril Muhammad, a member of the Nation of Islam. "In the 44 years I have known him I've never seen him this sick. To me, at one point, he was at death's door."

Mr Farrakhan, who has ruled his organisation with an iron fist for more than two decades, has said that he is suffering from prostate cancer and was treated in Libya by Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's doctors. But *The Final Call* quoted a recent speech in which he said that he did not know what was wrong with him.

He said the "illness took me down so fast that it concerned me greatly because, though I'm nearing 66, I have never been sick like this in my life. If it is a virus, several doctors that are working on me have not found that."

The newspaper said that after Mr Farrakhan made his speech he rallied, and this was attributed by the author to a miracle wrought by God.

But the *Village Voice* reported that members of his group claim he has been poisoned by the US Government. "The minister says he knows who, he knows where, and he knows why; he just doesn't know what was used to posion him," said a "Muslim insider" quoted by the paper.

Mr Farrakhan was said to have disappeared from view.



Farrakhan: diagnosed with prostate cancer

64,000 pigs to die in virus scare

From Reuters in Kuala Lumpur

MALAYSIAN armed forces will have killed 64,000 pigs by this weekend to fight a deadly virus said to have caused the deaths of up to 51 people and prompted a major health scare, officials said.

About 1,400 soldiers and policemen will move into three areas in the western state of Negri Sembilan to shoot the animals, suspected of carrying a virus causing the deadly Japanese encephalitis (JE) disease, officials said.

They said at least 31 people have died in Negri Sembilan of suspected JE, transmitted from infected pigs to humans by the culex mosquito. Unconfirmed reports say that up to 51 people have succumbed to the disease since October.

Its symptoms include headaches, dizziness, fever and convulsions leading to loss of consciousness. Delays in treatment can result in paralysis or death.

The JE outbreak has caused some farmers to abandon their pigs and flee, emptying several towns in Negri Sembilan.

"Panic-stricken farmers have lost confidence, leaving their pigs unfed and roaming around," Ling Liong Sik, Transport Minister and head of the Malaysian Chinese Association, was quoted by the *Star* newspaper as saying.

Oscars upstaged by a real-life drama

Giles Whittell reports on the furore over the decision to give ostracised Elia Kazan an honorary award

IN A looming nightmare for the Oscars organisers, the year's top films and actors seem certain to be upstaged on Sunday by a 50-year-old feud over Stalinism and the ethics of betrayal.

Elia Kazan, one of the century's great directors, has refused to apologise for naming eight colleagues with links to the Communist Party at the height of the McCarthy era. As a result, when he receives an honorary Oscar in front of a billion television viewers he may be applauded, booed or met with sullen silence.

Now 89 and in failing health, the cinematic genius behind *On the Waterfront* and *East of Eden* was ostracised by Hollywood for talking to the notorious House Un-American Activities Committee in 1952. He has not discussed the affair since declaring bluntly four years ago: "I don't care any more."

But his wife broke the family's silence this week, warning that those who have called for a televised apology: "It's not going to happen."

The decision to recognise Kazan for his lifetime's work has already overshadowed the duel between *Shakespeare in Love* and *Saving Private Ryan* for the year's Best Picture prize. The decison was taken after an impassioned speech by the actor Karl Malden, one of the director's oldest friends, but it drew an angry response from those who claim he had wrecked their careers.

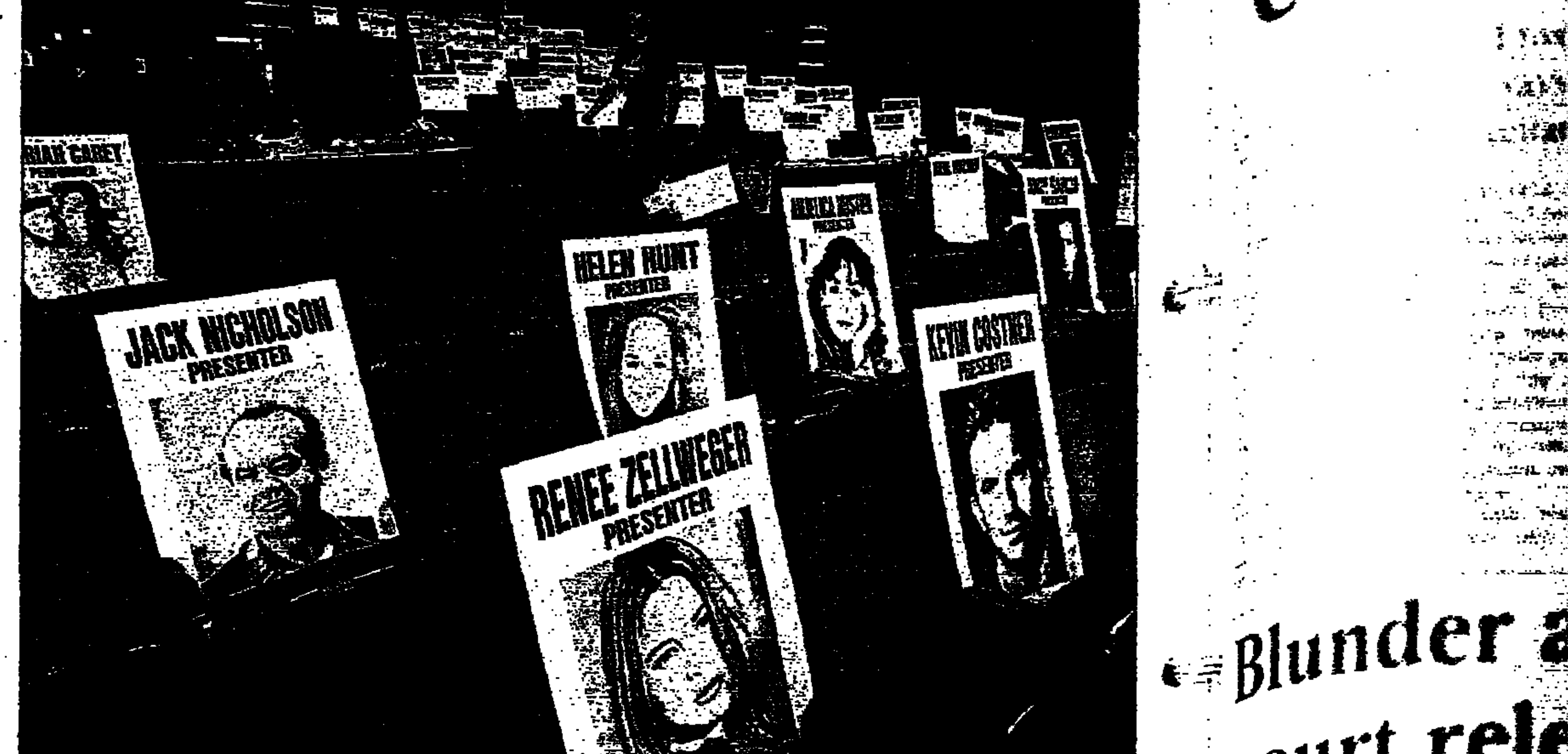
Abraham Polonsky, 88, has said of Kazan's award: "I'll be watching, hoping someone shoots him. It would no doubt be a thrill in an otherwise dull evening." Polonsky scarcely worked in Hollywood after the director "outed" him as a Communist.

Bernard Gordon, also blacklisted because of Kazan's evidence, has said that he contributed to "one of the worst civil liberties violations in the country". The two former screenwriters have placed advertisements in the Hollywood trade press calling on those attending the Oscars to sit on their hands rather than applaud during the presentation.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which awards the Oscars, is alarmed. "I know the people doing the show are worried; we could have some real Oscar drama," said Army Acherd, *Daily Variety*'s senior columnist. He has condemned the award and accused the Academy of trying to muzzle dissent by asking Robert De Niro and Martin Scorsese — "two heavyweights" — to present it.

De Niro and Scorsese have been conspicuously silent on whether they consider the award appropriate.

MICHAEL CAULFIELD / AP



Placards of stars who are expected to attend the Oscars ceremony in Los Angeles on display during a rehearsal

'Shakespeare in Love' eclipsed by a legal suitor

BY GILES WHITTELL

FOUR days before the Oscars, the makers and writers of *Shakespeare in Love* have been sued in Los Angeles by a novelist who claims they stole her story.

Faye Kellerman's Elizabethan intrigue, *The Quality of Mercy*, "could well have been subtitled 'Shakespeare in Love'," according to the federal lawsuit filed on Wednesday. Published ten years ago, its plotline is about a young and impoverished Shakespeare falling for a woman who becomes betrothed to another.

Tom Stoppard and his fellow screenwriter for *Shakespeare in Love*, Marc Norman, are both named as defendents in the suit along with Miramax, which financed the film, and Universal, which is distributing it.

Ms Kellerman and her lawyer, Barry Novack, are seeking unspecified damages.

The film-makers have not yet responded to the accusations of plagiarism — though they faced similar ones barely a month ago, when devotees of the 1941 British novel *No Bed for Bacon*, by Caryl Brahms and S. J. Simon, pointed out that it, too, concerned a young Shakespeare cured of writer's block only by a passionate fling with a beautiful woman of noble birth pretending to be male in order to act.

Norman, who wrote the first draft of the *Shakespeare in Love* screenplay, denied having read *No Bed for Bacon*. Stoppard admitted "flipping through" it, but said that he found it "of no use".

No legal action has yet been filed on behalf of Brahms and Simon, and that complaint was dismissed by Miramax as "little ado about nothing".

Ms Kellerman's lawsuit is clearly timed to cause maximum embarassment, however; it was filed as virtually the entire *Shakespeare in Love* cast gathers in Los Angeles to celebrate the film's 13 Oscar nominations.

Plagiarism has been called "a cancer on Hollywood" by one expert attorney in the field — but is notoriously hard to prove. Lawsuits alleging pilfered material are commonplace whenever a film turns into a hit.

The strongest case in recent years was brought by Barbara Chase-Riboud agains Dreamworks SKG, which she claimed lifted the story of her book, *Echo of Lions*, for the Steven Spielberg slave mutiny film, *Amistad*. The suit was settled out of court.

Joseph Fiennes, left, as the lovelorn young Bard, and the writer Tom Stoppard

Missile fears push US to unveil Son of Star Wars

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

RUSSIA and China yesterday attacked America's plans to revive its "Star Wars" missile defence programme. A "Son of Star Wars" was expected to be passed swiftly yesterday in the House of Representatives — a day after being overwhelmingly endorsed by the Senate.

The speed with which President Clinton and his fellow Democrats have reached agreement with Republicans after years of partisan battling is a reflection of growing worries over the development of missile programmes in North Korea, Iran, Iraq and possibly other rogue states. The final blow came with revelations that China may have stolen US nuclear missile know-how.

The Senate, by a vote of 97 to three, committed America to deploy a defence against limited missile attacks "as soon as technologically possible". The Bill did not specify a time frame or costs, but the Pentagon envisages having radars to track incoming missiles, and land-based interceptor missiles to shoot them down, by 2005. The defences would be a sharply scaled-back version of the vast anti-missile umbrella based in space that was proposed 16 years ago by Ronald Reagan.

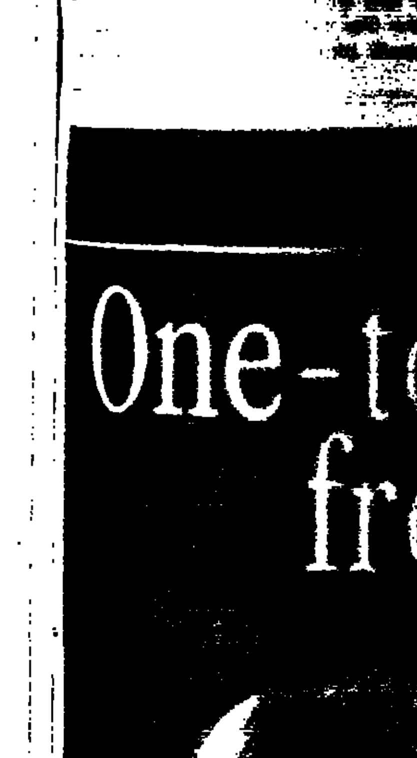
His dream proved technically infeasible and lost its purpose with the Cold War's end. The latest proposal has revived the Russians' objections to Star Wars — that it would breach the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty agreed by Nixon and Brezhnev.

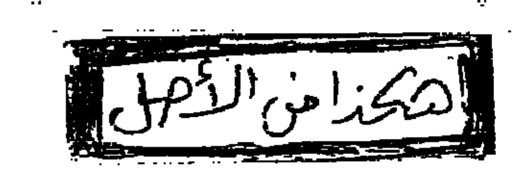
Both gambled that, if neither side had the means to defend its cities, then neither would be the first to launch an attack. In time, trust and confidence engendered by the ABM treaty led to the Start 1 and 2 agreements to reduce nuclear arsenals.

The Russian Foreign Ministry said that the Senate Bill would undermine arms control agreements and posed a serious threat to strategic stability. Russia has been resisting US proposals to amend the ABM treaty to allow limited missile defences.

To underline the point, the State Duma introduced a Bill this week making its delayed ratification of Start 2 conditional on Washington's adherence to the treaty. To placate Moscow, Democrats persuaded Republicans to add opaque language to the Senate Bill saying that America still supports arms control efforts and that Son of Star Wars must be consistent with policies to reduce Russia's nuclear stockpile.

China's misgivings about a US missile defence shield are rooted in fears that similar technology will be used to protect Taiwan. Blunt opposition was expressed by Zhu Rongji, the Prime Minister.





UN official 'enslaved niece'

Envoy loses immunity as relative says she was beaten and kept in cellar, writes Adam Sage in Paris

A HIGH-RANKING civil servant at Unesco in Paris has been deprived of diplomatic immunity amid accusations that he enslaved and maltreated his niece.

The unprecedented decision to lift immunity from criminal prosecution underlines the embarrassment of Unesco (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) at the claims made against Gabriel Mpozagara and his wife, Candide, diplomats said yesterday.

The French police have launched a formal investigation into the allegations, which the couple deny. Mr Mpozagara, 58, is paid a basic salary of $75,000 (£46,000) a year and a living allowance of $30,000 as director of the Africa and Least Developed Countries Section at the United Nations organisation, which was set up to promote "world peace". Yesterday the Mpozagaras' niece, Chantal Nsamirizi, spoke publicly for the first time. She told the magazine *L'Evénement* that she had been beaten and forced to live in the cellar of their luxury mansion on the outskirts of Paris.

Mlle Nsamirizi, 20, said: "My days were always the same. I got up between 5am and 6am to get breakfast. I did the cleaning, the ironing. I prepared and served the meals, I cleaned the kitchen and I went to bed at about midnight, sometimes later. I didn't have the right to go out. I was a prisoner."

She said she had fled her native Burundi after her Tutsi parents were massacred by Hutus in ethnic fighting in 1995. "I would surely be killed if I went back," she told the magazine. She was taken to Paris by Mme Mpozagara, 53, along with her four sisters, three of whom were subsequently placed with French foster parents. The other sister, Yvette, 14, was also kept in the Mpozagaras' cellar.

"We were not allowed to use the toilets and bathrooms in the house, and if we wanted to wash ourselves, we had to get water with a bucket from the kitchen," said Mlle Nsamirizi. "Sometimes our aunt flew into rages and hit us with her hand or with a broom."

In 1996, French social workers denounced the conditions in which the two girls had been obliged to live. In January, after contacting an anti-slavery association, they ran away. Police began inquiries in connection with their claims at the beginning of January, asking Frederico Mayor, director-general of Unesco, to lift diplomatic immunity. "But he dragged his heels," said the girls' lawyer, Patrick Caillet. I wrote saying that, if he did not lift immunity within a day, I would go to the press. Within 24 hours of my letter, he had done so."

Human rights workers say the decision to lift immunity is important because diplomats working in Paris have always escaped slavery allegations. "It would seem that there have been quite a few diplomats who have used people from their own countries as slaves," said M Caillet. Mme Mpozagara has since returned to Burundi, but her husband, a former Justice Minister in Burundi, has continued in his job at Unesco's headquarters in Paris. He is one of about 100 directors of the organisation that employs a total of 2,600 people and spends $544 million (£334 million) a year. Britain rejoined Unesco in 1997 after leaving it 12 years earlier.

The Mpozagaras claim that their niece has been "manipulated" by rights associations.


LINKS

http://www.unesco.org/ — Unesco's Website
http://www.unicef.org/fitpright.htm — Unicef reports
http://www.channel1.com/~aasg/index.html — The American Anti-Slavery Group website.

Blunder as genocide court releases Hutu

BY SAM KILEY, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT

JUDGES at the United Nations Rwandan genocide trials yesterday freed a former major, who was indicted for the murder of ten Belgian paratroops and Rwanda's Prime Minister, because of a bizarre blunder by prosecutors.

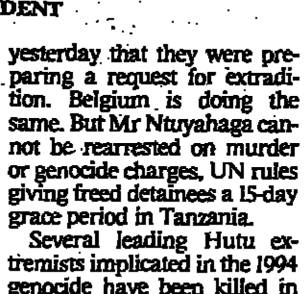
Bernard Ntuyahaga, who commanded government soldiers alleged to have beaten the paratroops to death with iron bars, was freed by judges at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda at Arusha in northern Tanzania after the prosecution decided to drop charges against him there so he could be extradited to Belgium.

But hopes of his facing a Belgian court were shattered when the judges agreed to the dropping of the charges, then ruled unanimously they had no right to extradite prisoners from UN custody to another country. "The tribunal orders the immediate release of Bernard Ntuyahaga," Judge Navanthem Pillay of South Africa told a stunned court.

The defendant, also accused of presiding over the rape and evisceration of Agnes Uwilingiyiana, the Prime Minister, was deeply unhappy. Fearful of extradition to Rwanda, where he would have faced a firing squad if convicted, he entered Tanzania illegally last year from Zambia, where he had been hiding, to surrender to the UN. About a dozen people have been executed in Rwanda for genocide, and tens of thousands jailed in miserable conditions. The maximum penalty the UN can impose is life imprisonment; two mass killers have been given that sentence so far and another has been jailed for 15 years.


Ntuyahaga: fears facing Rwandan firing squad

"I fear for my safety. I think there has been some kind of deal," he said after he was freed and then taken back to his cell where he spent last night. Rwandan officials said yesterday that they were preparing a request for extradition. Belgium is doing the same. But Mr Ntuyahaga cannot be rearrested on murder or genocide charges, UN rules giving freed detainees a 15-day grace period in Tanzania.



Several leading Hutu extremists implicated in the 1994 genocide have been killed in Kenya by hit men believed to be working for Rwanda's Tutsi-led Government.

Mr Ntuyahaga's alleged crime was committed the day after the start of the genocide of a million Tutsis and Hutu moderates, marked by the shooting down of President Habyarimana's jet at Kigali airport on April 6, 1994.

The ten Belgians had been guarding the Prime Minister, a Hutu, under an agreement between Tutsi rebels and the Hutu Government. A moderate who favoured peaceful coexistence between the two groups, she was among the first to die, as her influence could have undone advanced plans for the genocide.

Mr Ntuyahaga could face arrest by immigration officials which might lead to his extradition home. His best hope of avoiding that fate would be to give himself up to Belgian authorities in Tanzania and be flown to Brussels.

IAN COLLSIOO / PRESSENS BILD


President Mandela of South Africa, on an official visit to Sweden to thank it for its support during the apartheid era, admires the bust of Olof Palme, the former Prime Minister murdered in 1986, before addressing parliament in Stockholm yesterday

WORLD IN BRIEF

Ethnic clashes in Borneo kill 43

Jakarta: At least 43 people have died in two days of clashes between rival ethnic groups armed with knives and swords in a remote corner of Indonesia's Borneo island, police said.

More than 500 houses were set on fire and several of the victims were dismembered or decapitated. The fighting was between indigenous Malay villagers and immigrant farmers from the Indonesian island of Madura.

The violence, which started on Wednesday, was the latest bout of rival ethnic and religious feuding in Indonesia. More than 200 people have been killed in clashes between Christians and Muslims in the Maluku Islands in the country's east since January. *(AP)*

Treated like royalty

Oslo: King Harald of Norway must wait in line for hospital treatment like ordinary patients, a local council ruled after accusing a member of his family of jumping a waiting list for non-emergency treatment. *Aftenposten*, the daily newspaper, said the unidentified member of the royal family was treated at Oslo's Rikshospitalet hospital instead of waiting for a slot at Akershus, near Oslo — King Harald's official home district. *(Reuters)*

Judge overrules US

Miami: A judge ordered that $6.2 million (£3.8 million) owed to Cuba by US telephone companies can be used to pay compensation to the families of three Cuban-Americans who were killed when their light planes were shot down by the Cuban Air Force over the Straits of Florida in 1996 (David Adams writes). The ruling was made over the objections of the Clinton Administration, which argued that use of the telephone money was unwarranted interference in US foreign policy.

Legionnaires' toll

Amsterdam: An outbreak of legionnaires' disease at a Dutch flower show has killed 13 people and infected at least 50, the Health Ministry said. The Government said that up to 200 visitors to last month's Westfriese Flora show in Bovenkarpsel, 40 miles north of Amsterdam, had reported symptoms associated with the pneumonia-like disease. Officials intensified efforts to find the source and opened centres to answer questions from thousands of worried callers. *(AP)*

Kalashnikov's pistol

Abu Dhabi: Viktor Kalashnikov is following the path set by his father, Mikhail, inventor of the assault rifle, and has launched his own pistol machinegun, the Bizon 2, which is to equip Russia's police force. "The Bizon 2, which has a laser guidance system, is my latest invention. It was bought by the Interior Ministry in the summer of 1998 and I am very proud of it," Mr Kalashnikov, 56, said at the IDEX-99 defence exhibition here. *(AFP)*

Rainman struck dead

Lagos: A Nigerian rainmaker was killed by lightning this week as he climbed onto a building where a burial wake was being held and tried to divert a rainstorm, the *Post Express* said. The man, known as Rasaq, was employed by a family in Abeokuta, southwestern Nigeria, to hold off the rain threatening the burial party and had just climbed onto the roof and started appealing to Sango, the Yoruba god of thunder, when lightning struck and threw him to the ground. *(AFP)*

SIX OF THE BEST
BARELY THERE MAKE-UP



SHELL EYESHADOW, £12
This pale, dusky-rose colour with a slight shimmer is meant to be an eyeshadow but also works as a light blusher.
Stila, from Space NK (0870 169-9999)
8/10

PALETTE, £8
All-in-one make-up palette with shimmery nude eyeshadows, silky-textured blushers and glossy lip colours in soft earthy tones.
Colour Essentials at Marks & Spencer (0171-935 4422)
10/10

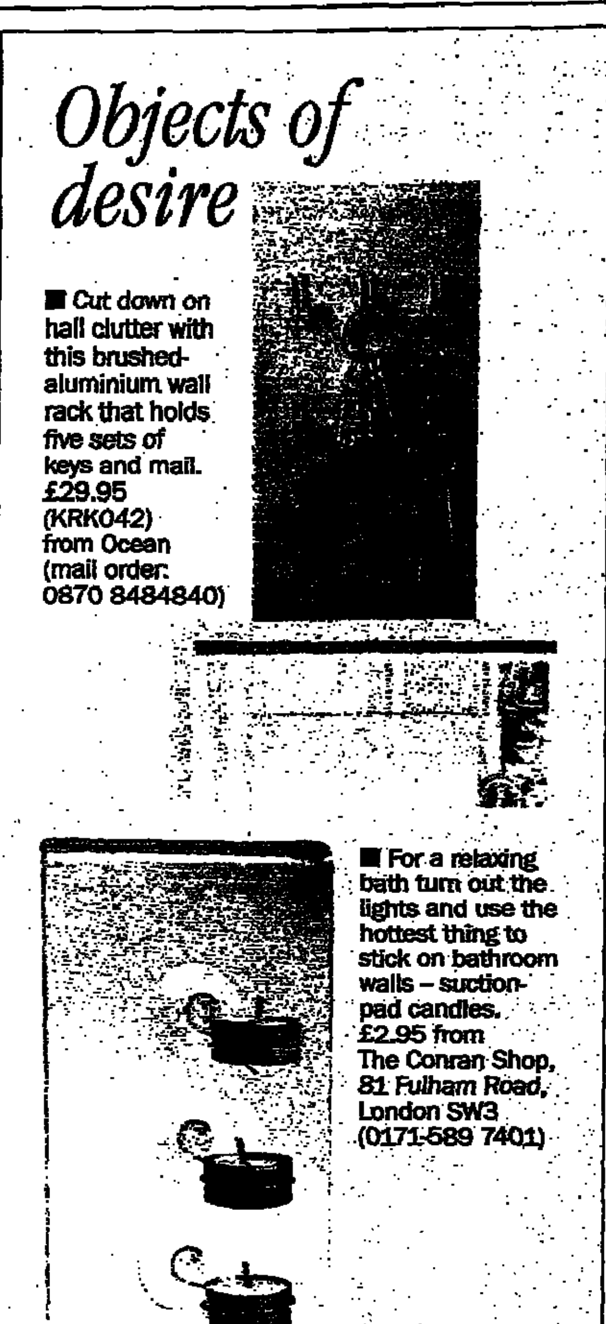
GLOW, £3.95
Unless on holiday, this is too glittery for daytime. Very little is needed and the natural colour is easy to apply.
17 Shimmer sensation at Boots (0845 0708090)
6/10

PEONIE BLUSH, £13
Amazingly subtle when applied. The colour looked strong but when used it produced a pretty, rosy glow.
Philosophy, at Liberty (0171-734 1234)
9/10

BIRTHDAY SUIT LIPSTICK, £1.99
Long-lasting creamy terracotta shade. Suits dark and light skin tones and blends with other lipsticks.
Rimmel, at Boots, Superdrug and chemists (01233 625 076)
9/10

NUDE NAILS, £11
Less than perfect nails will appear well-groomed as this polish blends subtly with skin tone. Slightly pearlised, it is available in three tones (no 282/283/284). And it is slow to chip.
Lancôme at department stores and chemists nationwide
10/10

Objects of desire



■ Cut down on hall clutter with this brushed-aluminium wall rack that holds five sets of keys and mail. £29.95 (KRK042) from Ocean (mail order: 0870 8484840)

■ For a relaxing bath turn out the lights and use the hottest thing to stick on bathroom walls – suction-pad candles. £2.95 from The Conran Shop, 81 Fulham Road, London SW3 (0171-589 7401)

Teacups and why size matters



PHOTONICA

"What I want are some good-looking, generously sized cups that hold half a pint at least"

There was a pretty bit of synchronicity the other day when, wandering down Kensington High Street in pursuit of teacups, I drifted into the Oxfam shop and found, hanging on the rail as though it had been waiting for me, a handsome jacket by Helen Storey in heavy white cotton, printed all over with teacups taken from early 19th-century Wedgwood pattern books.

I can recognise a tap on the shoulder from the finger of fate when I feel one, so I snapped up that jacket and carried it home in triumph, where it turned out to look just as distinguished as I had hoped with my nice new navy cropped pants from French Connection. On the other hand, I still haven't solved my teacup problem.

The sort of cups I was looking for are nothing like the ones on my jacket — fragile objects in translucent eggshell porcelain, daintily decorated with sprigs of flowers and foliage, or misty classical vistas of riverbanks and ruined temples. I've got lots of little cups like that in my china cupboard, and not one of them ever sees active service — partly because I am a terrible butter-fingers, and their chances of emerging unscathed from the washing-up process are virtually nil. But also because they hold such niggardly amounts of liquid.

I don't like having to drink tea, or coffee for that matter, in weeny sips as though it were rare old Marsala. And I don't care, either at breakfast time or at 5 o'clock, for all the ceremonial fiddling with milk jugs, sugar tongs and slices of lemon that seems to go with thimble-sized bone china cups. What I want are some good-looking, generously sized cups that hold a sensible amount — half a pint, at least.

Of course, they do these things better in France. If I were planning my ideal day, it would begin there. I would wake up in an enormous *lit bateau*, in a certain room overlooking the sea, with the light pouring in through the gaps in the shutters, the smell of coffee rising from downstairs, accompanied by the comfortable sound of someone else getting the breakfast ready. And on the tray, when it arrived, next to the coffee pot and the croissant, there would be a huge, proper, blue-and-white breakfast cup filled to the brim with *café au lait*.

At least one of my prim and proper French friends tells me that this is a lamentable lapse of taste and that no respectable French housewife would give shelf room to coffee bowls or oversized breakfast cups, but I don't care. Every time I

CUTTING EDGE

cross the Channel I try to bring some back with me. But the breakage rate is very high, and it occurs to me that it must be possible to restock without having to take the Eurostar every time. What I want is something unpretentious, easily replaced and good-looking enough to bring a whiff of my idyllic fantasy *levée* even to the horrid reality of the breakfast table at home at 7.30 on a weekday morning.

You might think Peter Jones, that great palace of quintessential Englishness, an eccentric place in which to start the search for Frenchified crockery. But you would be wrong. When you first step into the china department there seems to be nothing but mugs — all very well for nursery tea, but not exactly reeking of Gallic glamour. But press on towards the linen department and there emerges a miraculous selection of pretty, generously sized breakfast cups. There is Denby Stoneware in speckled lapis lazuli blue, offset with pale lemon or pistachio at £8.95 for a cup, £6.75 a saucer. If you share my weakness for the French bourgeois look, Gien's Bird of Paradise-pattern earthenware, with fancy scalloped edges, is perfect at £11.70 a cup, £8.50 a saucer and £11.50 for a little breakfast plate.

Less fancy but still very charming is Chanticleer, a bright blue cockerel with a scarlet comb trudging through a blue and white snowstorm on breakfast cups, £10.50, saucers, £6.50, and plates, £5.95. If you prefer monochrome at breakfast time, Emma Bridgewater's huge cream cup printed in black classical letters with "Good Strong Tea" and "Café au Lait" might be the very thing at £19.95.

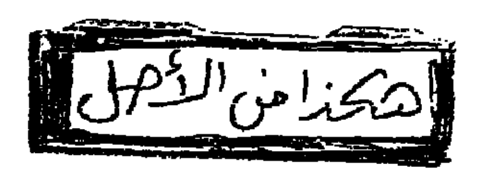
At Heals there is a pretty, summery Coquillage design with blue starfish and shells on pure white porcelain, £22.25 for a cup and saucer; and at Habitat plain white French porcelain coffee bowls with a silver rim are £6.95 each, matching plates £5.95.

Even better, for impoverished students, or anyone else with a sense of style and a tiny budget, is The Pier, where white earthenware bowls with a blue stripe and matching plates are just £1 each, and huge, hand-painted earthenware cups and saucers in swirly sky blue, almond green or palest harebell blue are £6.95 each.

Bhs has handsome Portuguese-painted earthenware. The nicest pattern, of splodgy cherries and peaches on a pale lemon background, comes only in a rather mean-sized cup and saucer, but there are generous cup-shaped mugs and small plates at £6 apiece and, almost as pretty, a cheerful yellow breakfast cup with a scattering of red and blue flowers sunny enough to bring a suggestion of spring to the gloomiest breakfast table.



Dull blonde hair can be given a spring gleam with a new range of hair-care products. The shampoo and conditioner are £4.25 each; lilac-tinted glossing creme and mousse, and hair balm with glitter are each £3.95. Sheer Blonde by John Frieda, from Boots nationwide.





MAN ON TOP

JOE JOSEPH

What? You haven't had an award yet?

I didn't want to be the one to have to tell you this, especially after you spent so much on that outfit, but I'm afraid you have not won an award this morning.

It was close. And we were all so impressed by the way you abided by the ancient awards ceremony tradition, whereby all nominees use enough hairspray to qualify officially as a fire hazard if placed near hot cigarette ash. But I'm afraid you missed out this time.

Actually, it's worse than that. As a result of today's disappointment, you are now one of only six people left in Britain who has not won an award for *something*. This means you have yet to enjoy that emotional experience of brandishing a shiny trophy in front of a hall full of people, all of whom are enthusiastically shrieking "why *him*?"

But the fact of the matter is that at your age, you really should have won *some* kind of award (though it's as well to prepare yourself now for the harsh fact that such a victory can upset the closest friends — unless you happen to be Demi Moore, in which case it upsets almost everybody). Even Al Gore has won an award, and he has less star quality than head lice.

And there are so many awards to choose from today. There are film awards, play awards, book and art awards, pop awards, TV awards, singing awards, awards for best pipe smoker, best spectacles wearer, best moustache-waxer, sportsman of the year awards, Nobel Peace Prizes, best commercial, best tie-wearer, best chef, best tablecloth in an Italian restaurant — and you haven't won any of them.

You could always play the aloof card, like Sartre, and refuse the Nobel Prize for Literature on the ground that, like Jean-Paul, you wish to be read only by people who feel like reading your books, rather than by what he dismissively called "celebrity collectors".

But this attitude might seem a bit rich if you haven't actually been to bed with Simone de Beauvoir. Or you haven't written several depressing novels about men who felt they didn't exist unless they did something drastic but who, having done something drastic, then became very nauseous. At the very least you should have eyes that stare out at the world in opposite directions, as if they've had a tiff and neither is quite ready yet to unfold its arms and bury the hatchet.

On the other hand, if you *do* have problems with your optical alignment, it's not too late to catch a flight to Los Angeles for Sunday's Oscars ceremony, where physical or mental disability is disproportionately rewarded by Hollywood (provided, of course, you don't have a genuine disability, in which case you can't get your foot in a producer's door — even if you *have* a foot. The disabilities that Hollywood prefers to fête are confected ones, such as Daniel Day Lewis's in *My Left Foot*, or Jack Nicholson's in *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*, or Geoffrey Rush as the unhinged virtuoso in *Shine*, or the blind Audrey Hepburn in *Wait Until Dark*).

What makes the Oscars such a benchmark in the awards calendar is that members of the American Academy of Motion Pictures cast their votes by means of a special voting system which, because it is both confidential and also uses the latest hacker-proof computer technology, can be relied on always to throw up the most undeserving winner from the list of nominees. To be frank, leaving it so late has probably ruined your chances of bagging one of the Academy's main prizes. But that doesn't mean you couldn't be a contender for one of the many awards dished out under "other categories", defined as "films you would never pay to see, even if the only alternative was staying at home and watching Demi Moore in *Striptease*".

But if you still come home empty-handed, don't despair. It can only be a matter of time before an award is created that fits you like a glove. Today there are so many rival awards for films and books that companies hoping to sponsor a new award have to be inventive if they want to find space on the mantelpiece for another bronze statuette, which explains the Footwear Federation Awards for Films in which Actors Wear Shoes of which the Uppers are made of Other Materials. Am I right in thinking that could just be *you*?

This hunger for awards also provides Tony Blair with a unique opportunity. Since he is committed to democratising the aristocracy, and since earldoms and dukedoms are the Oscars of the Old World, Blair should put all aristocratic titles — or "awards" — up for grabs in open competition. All titles could be awarded to British citizens after an annual vote by their peers. A postman might wake up to find he had been given the award for Best Duke of York, 1999.

This would be an innovative way of keeping the nation's historic titles alive, while also injecting more fair play and social mobility into British society. And believe me, if you are not a shoo-in for Leading Marquess in a Supporting Role, it'll be a travesty.

Why I gave it all up to be a witch

Witchcraft is a fast-growing spiritual practice in America. Phyllis Curott, once a celebrity lawyer, takes her new calling seriously. Should we? Interview by **Noreen Taylor**

SUZANNE HUBBARD



Phyllis Curott, the High Priestess of the Circle of Ara: "Many women in the media support what I am doing . . . Witchcraft empowers women, you stop taking crap"

The woman before me with the features of Carly Simon, dressed in Donna Karan and speaking with the eloquence of a poet looks perfectly at home in the lobby of a smart London hotel. She also acts the part, exhibiting the kind of breezy confidence one expects from a successful New York lawyer.

But Phyllis Curott has turned her back on a high-powered legal career in which she drew up contracts for rock-stars. So, Phyllis, you're now a full-time witch?

"I am, and thank you for coming to see me."

Why would you, a seemingly intelligent woman, call yourself a witch and high priestess? Are you fond of derision?

"I can joke about pointy black hats, like the rest. I've got a sense of humour. I've heard all the stereotypical stuff before: cackling, toothless hags flying around on broomsticks, invoking evil spells. I listen for a while, then I pull the plug and get serious, because the demonisation of witches is inextricably bound up with patriarchal religions and the tyranny women have suffered throughout history.

"The word witch comes from the old Anglo-Saxon word wicce, meaning wise one. Using the term 'witch' forces the world to confront its negative stereotypes and the dark history of misogyny from which those stereotypes have sprung." Curott is keen to banish more myths. Witches do not wear black, preferring mostly "jewel colours" such as blue, green and red.

"We do not worship the Devil," she says. "There was no Devil in the pre-Christian religion of goddesses.

"Nor do we cast spells to harm people — it's a grave violation of Wiccan spirituality to use power to control another. Witches learn to work with the energy present in the natural world, to transform themselves. Magic is bringing one's own divine power into manifestation."

OK, so when she poured the tea there was no need to worry about the pot containing the eye of a newt and the toe of a frog. It's all more serious, right? Formally known as the High Priestess of the Circle of Ara, the president of the Covenant of Goddesses, Curott claims witchcraft is one of the fastest-growing spiritual practices in the United States. Even the famous are drawn to it — in the preface to her book, she names four women who have come out in public as believers in the new goddess: Tori Amos, Cybill Shepherd, Erica Jong and Olympia Dukakis.

"Sisterhood is powerful," she says. "There are many women in the media who support and perceive what I am doing and who have helped me to reach a wider audience. Witchcraft empowers women. You stop taking crap. You say 'I'm sorry boys, move over. You don't have the one true way'. By so doing, you are challenging the last bastion of the patriarchal structure.

"I've toured 20 cities in the US talking to audiences about magic, telling them of the inner journeys I've made. Afterwards, women come up to me saying 'I know exactly what you're talking about. I've had those flashes that have turned out to be premonitions, too'." She senses that her stories of inner journeys are not convincing me and stops mid-sentence. "I wouldn't be involved if it was all a question of belief. What charges my batteries is evidence, experiences. You know what would be marvellous now? If I was at home I could invite you to one of my circles to do a bit of journeying.

"Everything would become so much clearer then. You would lie on the floor with the rest of my group, close your eyes and think, 'Oh this is so uncomfortable'. Then I would start drumming, you would eventually relax, breathe deeply, and begin to have visions.

"When I stopped drumming you'd sit up and talk about your visions with the others in the circle, and you'd find that you had shared the same images. You'd think you had been imagining it all, but you would have experienced something true and real."

MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY



In reality witches eschew black in favour of "jewel colours" such as red or green

This evidently has material benefits. Curott says the visualisation leads to energy, which one takes away from the circle, re-empowering the believer and helping her towards achieving goals. I think I've got it right. Anyway, I found myself wondering silently if that was how Cybill Shepherd landed her TV series *Cybill* when Curott suddenly said: "Cybill eventually got the show she wanted through a combination of techniques learnt through spiritual practices." Spooky or what! Being a witch, says Curott confidently, is not a rejection of science, nor is it a regressive step back into a world of superstition.

"I am the daughter of intellectuals. My parents brought me up to believe in ideals, not in religion. When I was a law student and began to have experiences I couldn't find answers for, I didn't go to the world of gurus and mystics. I searched in the rational world, and found that the answer to my flashes, telepathic visions and intuitions — too many to ignore, I might tell you — lay in science, in the study of quantum physics.

"Scientists now recognise that human beings have a remarkable capacity in ecstatic states of consciousness to integrate with the Universe, slowing our heartbeat, moving back in time, having out-of-body experiences. There are many such examples."

Curott's husband, the photographer Bruce Fields, joins us. He is also a witch because men can also be witches. Warlocks are, it appears, so yesterday.

"Since meeting Phyllis I've become active in the movement. I'm worried about the world and how we are all killing ourselves," says Fields. He then embarks on a history lesson about shamans, Native Americans, aborigines — old civilisations that did not, he claims, use the world as a warehouse of disposables. Curott asks: "Shall we tell you how we met?"

"Yeah, let's tell her," says Bruce excitedly.

"We met in a dream six years ago," she claps her hands excitedly. "I was divorced, dating like crazy, but bored. I decided I wanted love in my life. So on my birthday, when I get to do, like, introspective goals, and give gratitude to the goddess within, I made a love spell. Then I asked the sage of the Universe to give me a sign, so I'd know it was him.

"That night I dreamt of a dark, handsome man who was wearing a leather jacket and sitting on a Harley-Davidson motorbike. Eight months later some friends invited me to dinner to meet a friend of theirs. Guess who? Bruce. Yes, Bruce. On a Harley."

Well, dear reader, it worked for her. If you require a love spell, not to mention inspiration spells, success spells and instructions on how to make a protective amulet, her book reveals all. Broomsticks and newts are not required.

● Book of Shadows: Rediscovering the Ancient Wisdom of Witchcraft and Magic *by Phyllis Curott, Piatkus Books, £15.99*

The worst of all possible Europes

Bernard Connolly fears a new Reich of tribalism and corruption

The European Commission is a corrupt institution. It is corrupt because there is no ultimate accountability to the taxpayers of the European Union countries, who provide the money that the Commission then misuses. It cannot be resolved by a change of faces.

And it goes beyond the Commission. The top dog in the EU structure — the Council of Ministers — is equally unaccountable (and shares with Cuba and North Korea the dubious distinction of being the only political entity that legislates in secret). Lack of accountability is built into the EU structure, which is not only undemocratic but deliberately anti-democratic.

If Europe were federal, then the role of unelected commissioners would disappear and they would be replaced by ministers in a European Government. The executive might then, in theory, be accountable to Europeans as voters. But there is no chance of that. The people of most EU countries simply do not want it. Perhaps more important, politicians and bureaucrats are far too enamoured of Europe's "democratic deficit", and of the opportunities for unaccountable power — and in some cases personal financial profit — it brings. "Europe" is quite simply the most effective way anyone has thought up, short of dictatorship, for evading democratic control.

Why are electorates prepared to put up with such institutional corruption? The conventional answer, stated most nakedly by Helmut Kohl, the former German Chancellor, is that without "Europe" there will be war; with "Europe" there will be Nirvana.

> Proud nations are being reduced to empty symbolism

John Major once tried to defend the EU's incursions into British freedom and democracy by saying that, in effect, there would always be an England. But it would not be the England — and still less the Britain — of Queen, Parliament and Common Law. Instead, he said, Brussels would always let spinsters cycle home from church; warm beer would be there to compete with lager; village greens would resound to the thwack of willow on leather.

Major was probably too optimistic about how long these English eccentricities would survive the prying eyes of eurocrat zealots. But suppose he was right. He would then be defining our identity in terms of a set of cultural myths. The French coined the deliberately mocking *franglais* term *folklorique* to describe just this kind of hooey. But now the French themselves, once a proud, free and democratic nation, are increasingly reduced to the same empty symbolism as a poor substitute for independent statehood.

The great genius of the British and French polities — something they have in common with the United States — was that a nation was successfully created out of allegiance to political institutions. This has allowed those nations to become, to a greater extent than in any of the other European countries, genuinely multicultural and relatively tolerant. Let "Europe" take away that allegiance by destroying the relevance of domestic institutions and the British and French nations would dissolve. The ineradicable desire of human beings for a sense of belonging would then be expressed in tribal ways: through race, language, religion, sexual orientation, accent — and through hostility to anyone with different tribal characteristics.

The promotion of Frenchness and Englishness in cultural terms will be an open invitation to racists. If Britain and France are subsumed into "Europe", those excluded from the majority tribe within each country will have to defend themselves against all-too-profitable harassment — the harassment is already happening, if so far in mild form, in those flowers of "the Europe of the Regions", Scotland and Flanders. Postwar Europe has seen the horrors of Northern Ireland, Bosnia and Kosovo. As political nations are brought tumbling down by the EU, it may yet see more such horrors.

Germany, of course, has never been a *political* nation, and has been all the worse for that historic absence. German-ness has always been defined in ethnic terms; even today, proposals to allow German nationality to ethnic Turks born in Germany are considered shocking. As "a nation without a state", 19th-century Germany defined itself first in the "cultural" terms of Romantics such as Fichte and Herder and subsequently in the economic terms of the *Zollverein*. When the Greater Prussian empire was created, its lack of the political institutions of a democratic nation-state, combined with its unremitting hostility to the non-statist economic system of the so-called "Anglo-Saxon" world, made it a dangerously dynamic force, ultimately destroying that balance of power that had contributed so much to European peace. German experience suggests that Kohl's thesis is completely wrongheaded.

Worryingly, if Europe is evolving at all, it is evolving not towards a nation-state but towards an empire, along the lines of the Prussian-dominated Wilhelmine bureaucratic Reich, though perhaps with dominion exercised jointly by Germany and France. It thus threatens to provide the worst of all worlds. The increasing difficulty of providing for accountability within such a structure will mean that institutional corruption flourishes. Yet the effective destruction of national democracy will risk creating both political terrorism and tribal conflict. Idealism, however mistaken, may have played some part in the motivation of early postwar advocates of a united Europe. Today, sadly, is hard to believe that anyone can be genuinely idealistic about the EU. It is much easier to believe that the proponents of "Europe" are cynical to the point of evil.

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A song for Ireland

White House cabaret turns and platitudes are no solution to Ulster's tragedy

Simon Jenkins

Bill Clinton is becoming the ham actor of Irish diplomacy. At the White House on Wednesday night, he just managed to keep a straight face and solemnly tell his Ulster guests to "resolve their differences" before Good Friday.

He flashed his sequins, danced a jig and put some more bourbon on ice. Resolving Northern Ireland has always seemed that simple to the expatriate Irish of America. Indeed, all the world's ailments seem simple from within that mighty fortress. It is as if the tears of nations could be dried by dropping a bomb, signing a cheque or squeezing a hand on the White House lawn. I once stood on the beach in Beirut and watched a vast American battleship nonchalantly lobbing shells into the mountain villages behind me. It was under orders from President Reagan to "do something about Lebanon". The ship then steamed off home. "That'll teach the Ay-rabs to mess with Uncle Sam," said an American diplomat ironically.

American platitudes will never solve Ulster's differences. The peace process is neither peaceful nor a process. It is merely another chapter in a six-year-old saga of jaw-jaw amid low-intensity war-war, to which we bore sad witness yesterday in Portadown. Those who have watched governments mishandle Northern Ireland for years teeter between rage and despair. Perhaps, as Eliot said, humankind cannot bear very much reality. But we are entitled to ask, after 30 years, how much longer this unreality is to continue. So much hot air, so many conferences, so many corpses, and for what? More photo opportunities.

The 1998 Good Friday agreement was flawed for precisely the reasons stated at the time. It was never an agreement. Nobody so much as shook hands. It was merely a muted acceptance of an unbalanced list of putative concessions. The IRA would get all its men out of jail and sit in a new assembly and on its executive, handsome reward for three decades of mayhem. Unionists said they would buy this on one condition. If they were to share the running of the Province with members of the IRA, the IRA should be visibly and completely disarmed.

The leaders of Britain and America, powerful men before whom even the tyrannical Saddam and Milosevic are supposed to quail, pledged themselves to achieve this disarmament. They have failed. The IRA has called their bluff. The deal was clear, so the deal must be off. The Unionist leader, David Trimble, may let ambition get the better of him, and try next week to set up an executive of sorts. But if he does he will go the way of Terence O'Neill and Brian Faulkner, Ulster leaders before him. If Mr Trimble rules the Province with the present IRA/Sinn Fein, his followers will desert and he will fall, rammed on to his sword by London's ineptitude. If he rules without the IRA, he will rule honestly, but almost certainly without nationalists, which destroys the whole point.

Even if miracles happened and a cross-community, power-sharing executive is set up with majority Unionist consent, it will fail. Power sharing has been tried three times before, in different guises, in 1973, 1975 and 1982. As Vernon Bogdanor points out in his new study *Devolution in the United Kingdom* (OUP), Stormont was always meant as a Unionist bulwark against Irish Home Rule. It was inevitably a symbol of a paranoid, one-party state. It presided over the freezing of the Province into one of Europe's most politically primitive enclaves, a freeze that direct rule has sustained.

Executive power-sharing is a concept of great delicacy, demanding a spirit of compromise and tolerance among group leaders and followers. The idea that it could be imposed on Northern Ireland has always been ludicrous. Its use to heal the wounds of a divided community might apply — I know not where — if the community were eager to make sacrifices for that healing.

The recent history of Stormont has been of wounds kept open, paraded, bled. Yet power-sharing at Stormont is still the policy of the London Government, even as it approaches its fourth collapse. Not since the Great War has a British high command seemed so bereft of exits from a well-dug trench. Of course there is an alternative. There always is in politics. The most likely is the continuance of direct rule. Ever since 1973, British ministers have parroted the truism that "peace will not come until the men of violence are defeated". They have used the existence of the IRA as an excuse for avoiding reform. Ulster has become the fatted calf sucking on the British taxpayer's udder, as its middle class knows to its profit. The status quo has made Ulster relatively rich.

Or the Government could change its mind on devolution, and devolve not to regional power-sharing but to the counties and cities which were foolishly stripped of power at the time of direct rule. County and city government still exists in England. It is hardly radical. Such councils would be dominated by one or other community, albeit under a British security and civil rights umbrella. But political power in the Province overall would be "shared" geographically, rather than centrally. Anyone worried that this might lead to ethnic cleansing should study the demographic polarisation in Ulster under British rule: worse than anything under the so-called Protestant ascendancy.

This option might at least begin to rebuild Northern Irish politics through responsible local democrats, instead of the present raucous cheerleaders. The councils would be small, but no smaller than such units in many European countries. They would bring to the fore a new generation of local leaders, in place of today's extinct volcanoes. The performance of the present Belfast and Londonderry city councils, the strongest existing democratic units in Ulster, is promising. They have not proved the tinpot cauldrons of bigotry at which direct-rule officials love to sneer. They offer a way out of the impasse. Mr Trimble could always run for mayor of Belfast. The violence will continue.

As long as Britain rules any of Ireland there will be violence, emanating as much from the old IRA families in the villages of Armagh and Tyrone as from the politics of Belfast. When an ageing Official IRA declared its ceasefire in 1962, it took just seven years for the younger Provisionals to form. Now they have aged and ceased fire in turn. The banner is passing to the splinters, reinforced by those streaming out of Mo Mowlam's jails.

The way to handle such violence is not by freezing local politics, which has been British policy for 30 disastrous years. Nor is the answer to glamorise the men of violence and offer them a de facto veto on political reform: the trap into which Tony Blair is in danger of falling. They should be marginalised as criminals and not let out of jail. Leadership and responsibility should be built on revived local democracy, not the esteem of the panjandrums of Stormont. This great conflict, after all, is about nothing but local democracy. American cities have been as divided and violent as any community in Northern Ireland. America's response has not been to suspend local politics and send in federal commissioners. It has been the exact opposite, to leave mayors, community leaders and police chiefs to graft their own solutions. The approach has been mostly successful. That should be America's advice to Northern Ireland.

British policy is on the brink of another humiliation. The American President has been hauled in to "sponsor" a dud plan to enfranchise two million Britons, and an IRA leader has gone to the White House and defied him. If Gerry Adams were an African or an Arab or even a Serb, Tomahawks would by now be thudding into his "hideouts" in Armagh and West Belfast. But Mr Adams is white, and kith and kin. So he is merely a bit of a card. We raise a glass to St Patrick, and strike up the band. It plays *The Wearing of The Green* and *The Sash My Father Wore* ... to the tune of *Direct Rule Forever*.

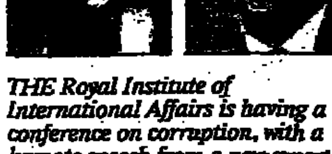
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Bianca booster

BIANCA JAGGER has been called in by the Liberal Democrats as they prepare to lose Paddy Ashdown.

She is to be presented to the party faithful in London next week as its latest secret weapon when she appears as guest of honour at a dinner at the National Liberal Club to raise money for the European elections. Bianca, pictured, was attracted not so much by Paddy's masculine appeal, as by the Lib-Dem policy on human rights. Senior bods suggest the evening will prove so jolly that she will make more high-profile appearances.





THE Royal Institute of International Affairs is having a conference on corruption, with a keynote speech from a new expert to the field, Sir Leon Brittan.

■ WINSTON CHURCHILL was closely linked to the release of the Zinoviev Letter which brought down the first Labour Government, an historian on intelligence claims. David Stafford, of Edinburgh University, is to revise his *Churchill and Secret Service* for Little, Brown after the publication of the Foreign Office's report into the smear which brought down Ramsay MacDonald's first Labour administration.

The report mentioned the involvement of Joseph Ball and Sir Desmond Morton, but did not mention their intimate relationship with Churchill. Stafford says the two spooks supplied Winnie with sensitive info to damage opponents.

"The FO report raises significant pointers to Churchill," says Stafford. "In the Twenties and Thirties, he was of the view that Labour was in bed with Reds."

ON the eve of the Brussels report, Neil Kinnock was unbowed at a jolly leaving party, confident that he would land the plum job of Foreign Affairs Commissioner.

■ JAMES BOND has sold his caravan. Roger Moore is putting his mobile home in Malta on the market because he does not have time to visit the island.

He fell in love with Malta after filming there a decade ago and bought the caravan while looking for a suitable villa. But after a recent trip to the communal showers, he finally admitted defeat.

SIR Peter Hall, John Tusa, Sir Alan Ayckbourn and a cornucopia of disgruntled artistic worthies are ganging up to stalk Chris Smith.

I gather they will launch the Shadow Arts Council next Wednesday to harangue the charming Culture Secretary for more money for their pet projects.



■ THE impending literary battle between John Major and Lord Lamont of Lerwick as they write their memoirs is far from being a level playing-field.

"I was a little alarmed to see that Mr Major has an army of people helping him to write his book," Norm tells me. "I have an army of one — me. It's Lamont against the world, as always."

GROVELLING in the Upper House after Baroness Jay of Paddington missed a page of her speech. "The pages stuck together," her unsavoury secretary barks. "And she apologised. OK?"

■ AFTER undermining Peter Jay, Eban Davis has turned to marriage. The economics editor of *Newsnight*, not the marrying type, has been promoting gay weddings in *Prospect*. "Gay and lesbian couples should be offered some kind of marriage arrangement. There's no reason to imagine gay couples are different from their heterosexual counterparts." I trust he cleared his letter with Sir John Birt.

JASPER GERARD

'There was murder in Mayfair, on trains, in airships, in Palm Court lounges, between the acts. We had nothing like it in West Cork'

William Trevor

In the quite brief time of the British Literature Prize's existence, it has become something of a tradition for the recipient to speak a little about his or her writing life. Strictly speaking, I suppose, mine began in a small schoolroom in Skibbereen when, as an alternative to parsing and analysis, I was occasionally required to compose six sentences on such random subjects as *A Wet Afternoon* or *A Day in the Life of a Dog*. I did my best, but even at seven I believe I probably guessed that there was more to words and what you did with them than recording rainfall or reporting that our smooth-haired fox-terrier was infatuated by our cat.

My world at that time was not extensive. There was memory, as far back as it would go, and the modest reality of Skibbereen, which afterwards became memory also: "A mile and a half it was, the journey to school, past Driscoll's sweetshop and Murphy's Medical Hall, and Power's drapery, where you could buy oilcloth as well as dresses. Pots of geraniums nestled among chops and ribs in butchers' windows. A sunburnt poster advertised the arrival of Duffy's Circus a year ago. Horses trudged slowly, carts laden with a single churn for the creamery. On fair-days farmers stood stoically by their animals, hoping for the best. On fair-days there was a smell of whiskey and sawdust and stout.

"You made the journey home again at three, the buying and selling over, the publican's takings safely banked, the last of the dung sliding to the gutters. If you had money you spent it on liquorice pipes or stuff for making lemonade that was delicious if you ate it as it was. The daughters of Power's drapery sometimes had money. But they were always far ahead, on bicycles because they were well-to-do. Or their mother drove them in the Hillman because of the dung."

Expanding my world, I began with the school stories: with hockey practices and midnight feasts, beloved head girls and dubious mesdemoiselles, the odd Bolshevik spy. Arctic exploration could not have been stranger, and I read until I had read everything, then turned to Dr Fu Manchu. After that it was the rugged decency of Bulldog Drummond, and a hundred or so gentlemanly private detectives.

All over England, it seemed to me, bodies were being discovered by housemaids in libraries. Village poison pens were tirelessly at work. There was murder in Mayfair, on trains, in airships, in Palm Court lounges, between the acts. Golfers stumbled over corpses on fairways. Chief constables awoke to them in their gardens. We had nothing like it in West Cork.

Somewhere in that communication, in the exhilaration of one imagination touching another, I sensed a marvel. I did not then know that this particular variation of creating something out of nothing — mood and image invented and transferred, lines of dialogue becoming people — was simply the art and craft of storytelling. Nor did I know that I was already the victim of storytelling's temptation.

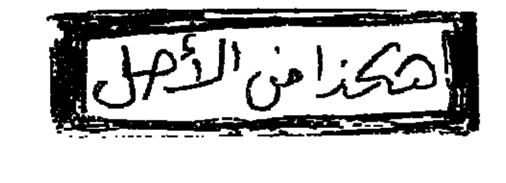
I've always thought it's best not to know how the thing is done. Marvel it may be, but it's a mystery too: and analysing can be destructive. Interviewers ask questions that seem reasonable enough and yet the answers are elusive. Have I known a man like Mr Hilditch in a recent novel of mine? Or a boy like Timothy Gedge in an earlier one? Or a Mrs Eckdorf or a Mrs da Tanka?

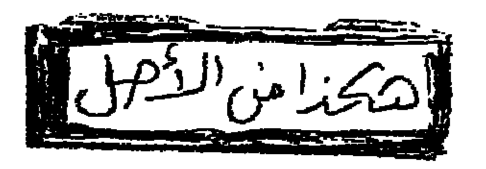
It's a bit of a muddle, I tend to say — the writer and the person untidily overlapping, yet sometimes hardly knowing one another. It's true that, to a degree, all fiction is autobiographical: the litmus paper endlessly dipped into personal experience, since the euphoria of happiness, the ache of grief or pain must of course be the storyteller's own. Memory hovers over the past like a figure with a metal-detector on a used-up beach. Yet far more of fiction's raw material comes out of nowhere.

Although storytelling's temptation came early, I did not seriously succumb to it until I was in my mid-thirties and had come to know well the England I had once imagined. By now I'd seen the lazy undulations of the Cotswolds, patches of sheep guarded by trimstone walls, old women at dusk strolling in their villages, itinerants at dawn moving through the fields, the sea at Sidmouth. I had known the beer-blurred underworld of Soho. I had frequented the last of the Corner Houses and watched the rise of the high-rise flats. The first short stories I ever wrote were set in London. For what has happened since you have kindly given me this prize.

The author is the winner of the British Literature Prize 1999. This article is an extract from his acceptance speech.

Philip Howard returns next week







ALWAYS WITH US

Blair joins the cast of politicians seeking to end poverty

Tony Blair yesterday chose the Beveridge Lecture at Toynbee Hall to add to his famed five "early pledges" another somewhat later one. His call for an end to child poverty in Britain within 20 years is an objective on a vastly different scale from that of reducing NHS waiting lists or school class sizes. There is much to be said in favour of deadlines in political life especially when the aim itself may be universally acclaimed as laudable. It is less certain whether that applies when, as in this case, the timescale is so long and the terminology involved distinctly uncertain.

Mr Blair is hardly the first politician of the Centre-Left to seek the elimination of poverty. It has been a constant theme, at the rhetorical level at least, for every Liberal or Labour Government this century. The Liberal administration that came to power in 1905 contained the first such set of crusaders. Although specific measures were enacted to protect the very young and very old, the thrust of this drive against poverty consisted of measures designed to improve the mobility and quality of labour. Winston Churchill, then President of the Board of Trade, thought that the introduction of employment exchanges alone would have an enormous and positive impact.

The Asquith Government combined the ethical tone of the Victorian age with the emerging social tools of a new era. It mixed public and private provision and recognised that there were limits to what could be imposed through centralised bureaucracy. Much was achieved and the worst aspects of national squalor banished. But poverty itself was certainly not eradicated.

Thirty years later it fell to two more Liberals — John Maynard Keynes and Sir William Beveridge — to take on what the father of the present welfare state would describe as the "abolition of want" from society. Their liberalism was, however, of a more egalitarian and state-centred form than that which had come earlier. As such it was more than acceptable to Clement Attlee and his colleague, Aneurin Bevan, in the 1945 Labour Government. These apostles of a New Jerusalem were confident that an infrastructure had now been secured that would remove poverty.

They were destined to be disappointed. Although absolute poverty had become extremely scarce, it was evident by the 1960s that even full employment and a large welfare state could not prevent vast disparities in incomes. The Wilson Governments sought to extend the Beveridge model in a piecemeal manner but found themselves overwhelmed by the wider, and ultimately unsuccessful, struggle to salvage what they could of social democracy. Most Labour activists, by contrast, had concluded by the 1970s that all poverty and unemployment was the inevitable and involuntary consequence of capitalism.

The substance of the Prime Minister's speech was somewhat more significant that the soundbite that accompanied it. Mr Blair outlined an approach that combats social exclusion through work, favours action against the cultural as well as economic aspects of poverty and concedes a larger role for the private sector. Although entitled "the Beveridge Lecture" his words were closer in spirit to those that inspired Mr Asquith rather than Mr Attlee.

This is not a distinction that Mr Blair deems it diplomatic to dwell upon in public orations. It is, however, the factor that offers him the opportunity to affect real change, if not on the ambitious scale of ending child poverty that he suggested. It will need to be addressed far more openly if his many admirable ambitions for welfare reform are to be translated into action.

RUSSIA'S RING

Where a sex scandal video is but one of the punches

Shadow-boxing, that favoured game of Russia's politicians when their president is too weak to keep them under control, has got out of hand. This time, for once, it may draw real blood.

A pornographic keyhole video shown on television yesterday — revealing Russia's ex-prosecutor, Yuri Skuratov, in bed with two women — was unremarkable in itself in a country where dirty tricks long ago replaced policy inititiatives. Before he mysteriously resigned six weeks ago, Mr Skuratov had dug enough dirt on his own rivals, including the business tycoon Boris Berezovsky, to make a counter-attack almost inevitable.

The latest infighting could deal sickly President Yeltsin a blow from which he no longer has the strength to recover. For the past eight years, Mr Yeltsin's one tactic for retaining supreme power has been to keep underlings at each others' throats. Periodically, he steps in as referee, knocks heads together, and fires anyone powerful enough to be a personal threat. This time, however, Mr Skuratov's supporters have mustered enough courage to take on the President himself.

Mr Skuratov has boxed clever by hinting that he is being picked on by a broad grouping of the wealthy pro-market politicians whom leftwingers, and ordinary Russians, love to hate. His claim that they include corrupt government ministers, ex-ministers and Central Bank officials was enough in itself to unite the disparate forces of the Left behind him. After months of uneasy truce behind which politicians quietly pursued individual ambitions and vendettas, Russian politics has again become home to a broad, hostile grouping of leftists on the warpath.

When, on Wednesday, Mr Skuratov openly defied the President by saying he planned to stay in his job, he found powerful allies. Unexpectedly, he was backed by the Federation Council which is made up of regional governors who usually obey the President's every whim. They refused to accept Mr Skuratov's resignation. Simultaneously, the Communist-dominated State Duma is planning its annual impeachment attempt.

Russia's elite is in bad shape to fight off a surprise challenge. Weeks of rumours that Mr Yeltsin was planning to sack his centrist Prime Minister, the Soviet-era grandee Yevgeni Primakov, were denied this week by both President and Prime Minister. But Mr Primakov's fate may yet be sealed if debt negotiations with the IMF next week go badly. There is continuing uncertainty over whether the unpredictable President might anyway shed a few left-wing ministers. From his bed, where he is recovering from a bleeding stomach ulcer, Mr Yeltsin has kept Russia guessing as to whom he will favour next, firing Mr Berezovsky from one post, flirting with the liberal economist Grigori Yavlinsky and Yegor Stroyev, Speaker of the Federation Council and Anatoli Chubais, cheerleader for the pro-reform faction, but making no binding commitments.

Mr Yeltsin's presidency is in endgame. At best, he has 15 months left in the Kremlin. Ill health makes it uncertain whether he will survive even that long. Russia's economy is in a mess and its relations with the West at a low ebb. As new conflict looms, the two strongest outside presidential contenders, Moscow's Mayor Yuri Luzhkov and the Governor of Krasnoyarsk, Aleksandr Lebed, are waiting quietly outside the ring to see how this week's fight shapes up.

GENETIC MENU

A lightly cooked up fraud upon the food-buying public

The best and worst of British caterers, from the greasy spoon to the Ritz, will have to bone up, and at some speed, on their molecular genetics. Yesterday Jeff Rooker, the Food Safety Minister, announced that regulations on the labelling of genetically modified food, originally drawn up last September by the European Commission, would be enforced not only in shops and supermarkets, but in cafés, restaurants, bakeries and delicatessens.

If the announcement had a ring of desperation about it, Mr Rooker cannot be blamed. For weeks the Government has been trying to get a grip on an issue which somehow escaped the focus groups, spin-doctors and political advisers with which it likes to surround itself. Public opinion has so far been unimpressed. At the root of consumers' antipathy is the feeling that they are being sold a product they neither sought nor particularly desire. By giving them a choice through labelling, Mr Rooker is now hoping to lance the boil and allow the fever to subside.

The intention here is noble enough. But it may be too late already. Many people are now convinced that GM foods are a threat both to their health and to the environment. It is pointless, even if true, to argue that those fears are exaggerated. For the Government and the industry they are a fact of life, no less potent for being based on limited understanding.

Will the labelling directive succeed in quelling the hysteria? It faces some serious difficulties. It deals only with foods in which the modified gene or the protein it produces is present in the final food. This is logical: one cannot enforce labelling regulations if there is no way of proving they have been breached. But it will not satisfy those who object to the process on principle. Allied to this is the question of the threshold below which a food will be deemed not to be GM. Vegetarians would hardly be happy if told that their nut cutlets contained less than 1 per cent meat, but that is likely to be the deal on offer. Such is the integration of the food chain that it will be very hard to ensure that products containing soya do not include a small fraction of the GM variety.

Further ahead lies the problem of sustaining non-GM sources of soya and maize. Farmers in the US, Canada, and Brazil will not willingly grow a less productive crop without charging a premium price for it. The supermarkets which have declared their own brands GM-free may think again when they find they are paying more for old-style soya.

The choice that the labelling regulations offer to consumers is therefore something of a fraud. It will be hard to enforce and is unlikely to last indefinitely. The best that can be hoped is that is will take the edge off the panic and provide time for unjustified fears to subside. Even that limited success would be welcome.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

A way out of EU Commission crisis

From Mr John Peek

Sir, It has been widely said that the resignation of the European Commissioners and of the President (letters, March 17) provides a welcome opportunity for reform of the Commission in respect of greater transparency, accountability and democratic control.

On November 20, 1991, you printed a letter from me in which I suggested that the Commission should surrender its power to initiate legislation to the Council of Ministers and be converted into an institution with functions resembling those of national civil services.

If this plan were adopted, there would be no need for a new President of the Commission and no need for any commissioners. The Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers would serve as head of the European civil service, channelling the decisions of the Council for action by the appropriate directorates. The Council would be answerable to the European Parliament for its legislative proposals, as is the government of a nation state.

There is much dissatisfaction and confusion over the role of the Commission. Is not now the time to do what has needed to be done long years ago?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN PEEK,
Les Broches,
07140 Chambonas, France.
March 17.

From Lord Phillips of Sudbury

Sir, The crisis of the Commission of the European Union is neither disaster nor triumph but an inevitable, and inevitably painful, step along its road of evolution.

The danger is that the lessons will be misconstrued by both extremes of political opinion vis-à-vis Europe. For those like myself, who are fiercely pro-European but no less fiercely antagonistic to any further political union until and unless British public opinion catches up, there are already signs that the underlying reality is being ignored.

Too many of the Euro-elite persist in their belief that Euro-democracy can be advanced simply by new constitutional formats and arrangements and by giving the European Parliament more power. But, if the "ordinary" public is not consulted, and their affections not engaged (as hitherto), that arrogance will be counterproductive.

A loveless European Union will not be able to withstand a prolonged, or profound, crisis, which is bound to come. That is why Europe must learn to walk democratically before it tries to run.

Yours truly,
ANDREW PHILLIPS,
As from: Cheapside House,
138 Cheapside, EC2V 6BB.
March 18.

From Mr D. N. P. Radlett

Sir, John Szemerey (letter, March 13) seems to suggest that Britain should cease to exist as a nation state. He calls in aid of this fundamentally misconceived argument the words of Winston Churchill. But Churchill observed in May 1947:

> There is the United States with all its dependencies; there is the Soviet Union; there is the British Empire and Commonwealth; and there is Europe, with which Great Britain is profoundly blended. Here are the four main pillars of the World Temple of Peace (*Winston Churchill*, by Henry Pelling, Book Club Association 1974).

No indication there that he was committed to the destruction of Britain.

On the wider proposal to create a political European federation, Churchill agreed with Anthony Eden, who commented: "This is something which we know in our bones we cannot do" (same source).

William Hague's policy on Europe has the support of an overwhelming majority of Conservative Party members.

Yours faithfully,
D. N. P. RADLETT
(Lecturer in Law and European Studies, Mid Kent College, Chatham),
119 Livingstone Road,
Gillingham, Kent ME7 2EJ.
radlett@easynet.co.uk
March 15.

From Lord Hesketh

Sir, If the Government is to have any credibility in demanding reform in Europe, surely it must set an example to our partners by accepting the resignations of our commissioners, as a matter of principle as well as recognising collective responsibility.

Yours faithfully,
HESKETH,
33 Cork Street, W1X 1HB.
March 17.

From Lord Bragg

Sir, Your Diarist (March 18) is misinformed in stating that I am a " 'deep sympathiser' with Lord Owen's ... pro-Europe, anti-single currency campaign".

I am no such thing and have no intention whatsoever of becoming an "upfront campaigner", as your Diarist asserted, for Lord Owen's group.

Yours faithfully,
MELVYN BRAGG,
London Weekend Television,
The London Television Centre,
Upper Ground, SE1 9LT.
March 18.

On the trail of the headless man

From Mr Michael Thornton

Sir, Richard Lamb (letter, March 15), whom I have never met, writes that Lord Denning made him promise not to reveal the identity of the headless man — or, more correctly, "The Man without a Head", as he was described in sections 330-333 of Lord Denning's Report — in the Argyll divorce case. He adds that he "cannot believe" that I "was not obliged to give a similar promise". It would have been wiser, and certainly more courteous, if Mr Lamb had sought to verify this wholly groundless speculation with me before electing to publish it.

Lord Denning first telephoned me at Claridge's Hotel in London on September 22, 1987, after reading in a newspaper that I had begun research on my book, *Argyll versus Argyll*. In his engaging and lively Hampshire voice, he said (of the headless man): "I want to know how you found out who it was." I replied: "I want to know how *you* found out who it was."

The result was an invitation to his home at Whitchurch in Hampshire for the first of several meetings, which he allowed me to tape-record. Darting about his study with an agility astonishing in a man of 88, he pulled out file after file containing highly sensitive material on which his report was based. Most of this documentation was never published. It revealed that three Conservative ministers had been involved in the Argyll divorce, and that one had felt obliged to offer his resignation from the Cabinet.

Lord Denning showed me the detailed forensic material by which this minister had been cleared of being the man in the photographs, as the late Duke of Argyll mistakenly believed him to be. The minister had been the duchess's lover, and had paid the duke a sum of money in consideration for not being cited in the divorce action — a fact which Denning, in his report, held to be "without foundation", but only because no evidence could be found in 1963 to substantiate it. Both the duke and the duchess subsequently admitted it was true.

The Duchess of Argyll herself was the only one of the 160 witnesses interviewed by Lord Denning who declined to visit him. Instead, with his customary courtesy, he called on her at her London house, 48 Upper Grosvenor Street.

Among the witnesses who did visit Denning was the man he suspected of being the headless figure in the photographs. Lord Denning was more than merely an outstanding judge. He had the razor-sharp mind of a great detective and forensic investigator. These qualities enabled him to set an ingenious trap for the witness in question and, with the help of the police, to establish beyond doubt that he was the man in the photographs. Denning was justifiably proud of this sleuthing and imposed no restrictions upon me with regard to it.

Finally, may I correct some misconceptions in your earlier report on this matter (March 8)? The 11th Duke of Argyll did not cite 88 men in the divorce. He cited four, but believed he had grounds against many more than that.

It is not correct to say that the duchess was "shunned by aristocratic society" after her divorce. On the contrary, she continued to visit every embassy in London, and ambassadors and members of the Royal Family, including Prince Michael of Kent, were among her dinner guests. Nor did she express a "wish to be buried at Inveraray Castle". The first clause of her last three wills stated: "I wish my body to be buried in accordance with the rites of the Roman Catholic Church in a cemetery as close as possible to Inveraray Castle regardless of its religious denomination."

To the great regret of many friends, some of her executors and immediate heirs seem to have disregarded this clause, even though the Argyll and Bute District Council confirmed in writing that they would have been happy to accept the duchess, a Scot, for burial at Glenshira Cemetery, just outside Inveraray, in accordance with her clearly expressed wishes.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL THORNTON,
c/o Dinah Wiener Limited,
12 Cornwall Grove, W4 2LB.
March 15.

Pilate and crucifixion

From the Dean of Merton College, Oxford

Sir, Everyone who has observed mob behaviour, personally or on television, should agree with Mrs Kathleen Jarvis (letter, March 16). What is incredible about a crowd of misguided demonstrators, with no right to speak for their nation, shouting "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matthew xxvii, 25)? Neither need we doubt that during the previous night, when Jesus was under arrest, St Peter had called down a similar imprecation on himself. The Rock of Christendom, the future first bishop of Rome, "began to curse and to swear, saying "I know not the man" (Matthew xxvi, 74).

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do", was the prayer of the crucified Jesus for those who had encompassed his death. St Paul never for a moment thought that either his fellow Jews or his fellow missionary St Peter would pass down a curse to their innocent successors. God, the compassionate, the merciful, must not be believed to endorse self-cursing or visit such curses on innocent successors.

Historians, and members of the Christian and Jewish faiths, feeling their way towards greater mutual understanding, need not jettison these well witnessed Gospel passages, for all the Gospel writer's fallibility.

Yours faithfully,
THOMAS BRAUN
(Tutor in Ancient History),
Merton College, Oxford OX1 4JD.
March 16.

From the Reverend David H. van Daalen

Sir, In New Testament times the High Priest, though he was supposed to be the spiritual leader of the Jews, was appointed by the Romans: and if he did not toe the line he could be replaced by someone more willing to cooperate.

So the tussle between Pilate and Caiaphas was not about whether Jesus was to be crucified, for it was not expedient for them to disagree on policy, but about who was to carry the can if awkward questions were to be asked in Rome about this judicial murder. No questions were asked in Rome, but later judgments on the two men have shown that Pilate was the more successful. It seems that the Barabbas incident helped him considerably in this.

Yours faithfully,
D. H. van DAALEN,
Shalom, 10 Sandwich Road,
St Neots, Huntingdon PE19 1TY.

From M. Maurice André

Sir, If Mr David H. Lewis (letter, March 13) really wants to be reassured as to the historicity of Jesus he may turn to the uncensored *Talmud* published in Israel (eg, the treatise *Sanhedrin* 43a), or even to the current version of *Sota* 47a, where it is written: "He practised witchcraft, seduced Israel and led her astray and to transgression", or again, to the collected *Toledoth Yeshuh*.

Yours faithfully,
M. ANDRE,
37 Avenue de la République,
F-92120 Montrouge, France.
March 15.

Animal experiments

From Mrs Joanne Bower

Sir, Scientists, with the help of genetic engineering, have at last succeeded in creating chicks with four legs (report, March 12, later editions). For years this has been seen as a means of making chickens more profitable — converting wings into legs which are more meaty. The present experiment at Harvard Medical School is said to be opening doors to understanding how vertebrate limbs acquire their identity, but it is sure to be taken up by vested interests scenting increased profits.

Ethical questions cannot be ignored in this type of research.

Yours faithfully,
JOANNE BOWER
(Honorary Secretary),
The Farm and Food Society,
4 Willifield Way, NW11 7XT.

Phantom diner

From Mr Danny Davis

Sir, Of course one would know if one were at dinner with the Chairman of the Invisibles (letters, March 16 and 17). His title would be on the name card at the seat that appears to be empty. However, I would not wish to be seated on his right.

Yours faithfully,
DANNY DAVIS,
30 King Georges Road, Bath BA2 1BJ.
March 17.

Gainsborough portrait

From the Director of the Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum

Sir, Museums throughout the land will share Elisabeth Bartlett's concern (letter, March 12) that Marlborough College's plan to sell its Gainsborough portrait may discourage donations to deserving institutions.

Donors, however, may rest assured that most museums, certainly those within the Museums & Galleries Commission's registration scheme, numbering some 1,700, abide by codes of practice, which declare "a strong presumption against the disposal of anything from a museum collection"; where a disposal does occur, museums agree to offer the object to another registered museum, thereby guaranteeing its retention within the public domain.

Other institutions would do well to follow this example if they are to retain the confidence of donors.

Yours faithfully,
PETER SAUNDERS,
Director,
Salisbury and South
Wiltshire Museum,
The King's House, 65 The Close,
Salisbury, Wiltshire SP1 2EN.
March 12.

Business letters, page 31

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

First-class trip for 'working-class lad'

From the National Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union and others

Sir, Some British newspapers including your own have sneered at the Deputy Prime Minister's recent visit to India (report, March 16). This was in stark contrast to reporting in India, where *The Times of India* said the visit marked a "thaw" in relations between our two nations.

We were members of the trade delegation that accompanied the Deputy Prime Minister to promote environmental technology. In a demanding schedule of high-level government and trade meetings, our discussions proved particularly fruitful. We met eight government ministers, key civil servants, as well as business and community leaders in New Delhi and Mumbai (Bombay, as was).

We joined Mr Prescott at a meeting with the CII — the Indian equivalent of the CBI. We feel that real progress has been made towards helping India tackle environmental problems, and at the same time improving and developing trade links between India and British industry.

This was a very successful visit which has helped to promote the transfer of technology and strengthen the important links between our two countries.

Yours,
JIM MOWATT,
National Secretary, TGWU,
KEITH CLARKE,
Chairman, Kvaerner Construction,
TONY ECKFORD,
Managing Director, Anglian Water,
DAVID JEFFERY,
Chief Executive,
Port of London Authority,
STEVEN MARSHALL,
General Manager, Business Development,
The National Grid Company,
TGWU,
16 Palace Street, Victoria SW1E 5JD.
March 17.

From Mr Daljit Sehbai

Sir, Your report today on John Prescott's "high-level" trip to India is tendentious in tone and totally unjustified and unreasonable in content.

What is wrong with the Deputy Prime Minister of this great and prosperous country travelling first-class?

Why should John Prescott have refused the offer of his hosts, the Indian Government, to fly him to Agra for his visit to Taj Mahal, a great historical monument in serious danger owing to environmental pollution?

Mr Prescott, according to your own account, had booked himself into a £173-per-night hotel room like the rest of the official party. He was upgraded to the Presidential suite by the hotel management, who felt honoured to have Britain's Deputy Prime Minister as their guest. It did not cost the British taxpayer a penny more.

Yours faithfully,
DALJIT SEHBAI,
Reform Club,
104 Pall Mall, SW1Y 5EW.
March 16.

From Mr George Stern

Sir, Speaking from one of his trips using Rolls-Royces, first-class air travel and £1,000+ per day hotel accommodation, John Prescott tells us that he is only a "working-class lad".

He is also the minister responsible for public transport in London which is used by people just as working-class as Mr Prescott. These are forced to use perhaps the filthiest and most unreliable bus and Tube system of any Western European capital, and with fares among the highest in the world.

Mr Prescott should try the transport that the rest of us have to use. Then, maybe, he would see a case for upgrading us.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE STERN,
6 Eton Court,
6 Shepherds Hill, N6 5AF.
March 16.

Tango revival

From Professor Eric Moonman

Sir, Ruth Gledhill described the rebirth of the tango in a number of countries (report, March 11).

However, the single most important event is not in Buenos Aires or Paris, but in Finland. Each year a world festival and competitions take place in Seinajoki during July. Tens of thousands come to dance and to elect their champions. On my last visit in 1998 there was an enormous increase in the number of Brits, but they all complained that there was a shortage of tango teachers here.

Yours sincerely,
ERIC MOONMAN,
1 Beacon Hill, N7 9LY.
March 15.

Sign of spring

From Mr H. Sutherland Pilch

Sir, I was walking down King William Street in the City yesterday and I saw a bare navel for the first time this year. Surely these days this is a better harbinger of spring than the cuckoo?

Yours faithfully,
H. SUTHERLAND PILCH,
Spring Cottage, Gay Street Lane,
Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 2HN.
March 18.

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 18: His Excellency Mr Khemaies Jhinaoui was received in audience by The Queen and presented the Letters of Recall of his predecessor and his own Letters of Credence as Ambassador of Tunisia to the Court of St James's.

His Excellency was accompanied by the following members of the Embassy: Mr Habib Miled (Counsellor), Mr Khaled El Fendri (Counsellor), Mr Kais Darraji (Counsellor), Mr Hosni Hamada (Attaché), Mr Tahar Kricha (Attaché), Mr Rachid Trabelsi (Attaché) and Mr Ali Jomni (Attaché).

Sir John Kerr (Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs) was present.

Mrs Sihem Jhinaoui was also received by The Queen.

The Queen, Colonel-in-Chief, The Royal Green Jackets, received Lieutenant General Sir Christopher Wallace upon relinquishing his appointment as Colonel Commandant of The 2nd Battalion and Major General Andrew Pringle upon assuming the appointment.

The Honourable Mr Justice Burton was received by The Queen upon his appointment as a Justice of the High Court when Her Majesty conferred upon him the honour of Knighthood and invested him with the Insignia of a Knight Bachelor.

The Lady Hunt was received by The Queen today and delivered up the Insignia of the Order of the Garter worn by her husband, the late Lord Hunt.

By command of The Queen, Vice Admiral Sir James Weatherall (Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps) called upon His Excellency Mr Vassilis S. Zafiropoulos, 51 Upper Brook Street, London W1, this morning in order to bid farewell to His Excellency upon relinquishing his appointment as Ambassador of Greece to the Court of St James's.

The Queen was represented by Lieutenant General Sir Richard Swinburn at the Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of The Duke of Rutland which was held in the Guards Chapel, Wellington Barracks, London, today.

The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon was represented by Lady Penn.

Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester and The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester were represented by Lieutenant Colonel Sir Simon Bland.

Prince Michael of Kent was represented by the Lord Carrington, KG.

Princess Alexandra, the Hon Lady Ogilvy was represented by Colonel Shaun Longsdon.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 18: The Duke of Edinburgh, President Emeritus of the World Wide Fund for Nature - WWF International today carried out Field Visits in South East Cameroon.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
March 18: The Prince of Wales, President, The Phoenix Trust, this morning chaired the Trust's Board of Directors.

His Royal Highness, President, The Prince's Trust, and Patron, The British Institute of Florence, this evening attended the film premiere *Tea with Mussolini* at the Empire, Leicester Square, London.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 18: The Princess Royal, Colonel in Chief, today visited the Royal New Zealand Corps of Signals and Royal New Zealand Nursing Corps at Linton Military Camp.

Her Royal Highness this afternoon left New Zealand for London.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
March 18: The Duke of Kent this morning visited Merseyside and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Merseyside (Mr Alan W. Waterworth, JP).

His Royal Highness then visited Cammell Laird Shipyard, Campbeltown Road, Birkenhead.

The Duke of Kent today officially opened The Laird Foundation, Birkenhead.

His Royal Highness this afternoon visited Birkenhead Priory, Priory Street, Birkenhead.

The Duke of Kent then visited R S Clare & Co Ltd, 8-14 Stanhope Street, Liverpool.

His Royal Highness then officially opened the Bonner Building of Contract Chemicals Ltd, Penrhyn Road, Knowsley Business Park, Prescot, Merseyside.

Royal engagement

The Queen will present a new Sovereign's Banner to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst at Buckingham Palace at 11.45.

Lecture

The Bristol Society
The Lord Mayor of Bristol, the Bishop of Bristol, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of the West of England and the Dean of Bristol were present at a lecture given for the Society by Mr Roger Laughton, Chief Executive Officer of United Broadcasting & Entertainment, at the University of the West of England on Wednesday, March 17. Mr St John Hartnell, Chairman of the Society, presided and Mr Louis Sherwood, Chairman HTV West, gave a vote of thanks. HTV West were the hosts at a supper held afterwards.

Duchy of Cornwall

Mr Robin Broadhurst has been appointed a member of The Prince's Council of the duchy.

Birthdays today

Mr Duncan Bluck, former chairman, British Tourist Authority, 72; Sir Nigel Broomfield, former diplomat, 80; Miss Glenn Close, actress, 52; Lady Georgina Coleridge, 83; Dr J.D. Davies, former Director, Polytechnic of Wales, 70; Professor Ronald Girdwood, former President, Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, 82; the Right Rev Ronald Gordon, former Bishop of Portsmouth, 72; Sir Ernest Hall, pianist, composer and property developer, 69; Professor Sir Peter Hall, FBA, planner, 67; Viscount Hill, 68; Vice-Admiral Sir Norman King, 66; Sir David Lumsden, former Principal, Royal Academy of Music, 71; Mr Patrick McGoohan, actor, 71; Sir Peter Masefield, aviation expert, 85; the Earl of Morton, 72; Mr David Nicholson, racehorse trainer, 60; Lord Plant of Highfield, 54; Lieutenant-General Sir Alan Reay, 74; Mr Philip Roth, author, 66; Mr Percival G. Sutton, former chairman, the Press Club, 83; Mr Duncan Weldon, theatre producer, 58; Mr Bruce Willis, actor, 44; Mr William Winfield, Headmaster, Mill Hill School, 52.

ASADOUR GUZELIAN

Kate Russell, creator and co-ordinator of the Leeds Millennium Tapestry, with a selection of the tapestry's panels which were on show yesterday at Harewood House. When completed, the 84ft x 8ft tapestry will be larger than the Bayeux Tapestry and will cover the whole range of life in Leeds. It will have cost more than £300,000, and will have taken tens of thousands of hours' work and millions of stitches.

School news

The Assam Valley School, India
The Governors of The Assam Valley School, India, announce the appointment of Mr Leslie Fox, Second Master of Yarm School, as Headmaster from July 1999, to succeed the founding Headmaster, Mr Paul Carling.

Dulwich College
Dulwich College announces the following awards:
13+
C.D. Broad Scholarships: D.M.L. Leonard, Bickley Park School; C.W. Tunstall, Dulwich College Preparatory School.
Harold Penney Scholarship: E.H.R. Morgan, Dulwich College Preparatory School.
Hartley Shawcross Scholarships: W.A. Roper, Dulwich College Preparatory School; S.P.H. Rose, Dulwich College Preparatory School; J.R.D. Rowe, Dulwich College Preparatory School; L.M. Sergot, Dulwich College Preparatory School.
Dr H.M. Fisher Scholarship: J.R. Mead, Bickley Park School.
Alleyn Club Scholarship: S.R. Levy, Dulwich College Preparatory School; M. Still, Dulwich College Preparatory School.
Music Scholarship and Honorary C.D. Broad Scholarship: B.C.G. Faulkner, Dulwich College Preparatory School.
Music Scholarships: A.P.J. Harrild, Dulwich College Preparatory School; E.B. McCullagh, Dulwich College Preparatory School.
Art Scholarships: R.R. Braude, Dulwich College Preparatory School; A.A.B. Shaw, Dulwich College.
Sir Joseph Bazalgette Technology Scholarship: O.M. Sprague, Dulwich College.
11+
Bainbridge Scholarships: D.J. Diamond, Dulwich College; M.C. Marshall, Elmhurst Preparatory School; R.T. Williams, Rosemead Preparatory School.
D.C. Baner Scholarships: T.A. Hashemi, The Hall School, Wimbledon; R.E.M. Sanders Hewett, Belleville Primary School; D.L.L. Thomas, Rosemead Preparatory School; A.W.R. Virgo, Dulwich College; J.M. Wisson, Dulwich College.
Lorraine Wilson Memorial Scholarships: C.M.G. Baugh, Highfield School; S.J. Clarke, St David's College; L.R. Cutler, The Roche School; M.W. Engel, St David's College; M.J. Harris, Elmhurst Preparatory School; R.M. Mulloy, Horniman Primary School; C.W.E. Stark, St Michael's C of E School; S. Tavares, Elmhurst Preparatory School.
C.C.P. Tanner Memorial Scholarships: T.M. Chalet, Highfield School; A.R. Greene, Rosemead Preparatory School; M.L. Kaufeler, Penwortham Primary School; M. Kasai, Alleyn's Junior School; J.P. Kirby, Stillness Junior School; T.L. Maine, Rosendale Primary School; S.S.A. Naqvi, Julian's Primary School; M.K. Saunders, Greenhayes School for Boys; J.M.S. Wade, Boutcher C of E Primary School.
Art Scholarship: J.F. Davidson, Dulwich Hamlet Junior School.
Music Scholarship: B.J. Harris, Crampton Primary School.
10+
W.E. Grey Scholarships: N. Ananderwaran, Furzedown Primary School; J.J. Bobb-Humfryes, Highfield Junior School; D.F. Donnelly, Edwards House (FKS School) Felsted; T.J.P. Stewart, Eaton Square Preparatory School; K-L.R. Tang-Wright, Downsview Primary School.

Service dinners

HMS Collingwood
Rear-Admiral John Trewby, Chief Executive Naval Bases and Supply/Chief Naval Engineer Officer, was the guest of honour at a dinner held last night on board *HMS Collingwood.*

The Anchorites
Surgeon Rear-Admiral Frank Golden was the principal guest at a dinner of the Anchorites held last night on board *HQS Wellington.*

Royal Artillery
The Royal Artillery spring dinner was held last night at the Royal Artillery Mess, Woolwich. Field Marshal Lord Vincent of Coleshill, Master Gunner, St James's Park, presided. Among those present were:
Viscount Ridley, KG, and Viscountess Ridley, General Sir John and Lady Stibbon, Brigadier-General J Schneider, Major-General and Mrs J A J P Barr, Major-General Leo J Baxter, Major-General and Mrs R H G Fulton, the Mayor and Mayoress of Greenwich, Mr and Mrs Charles Barrington and Mrs and Mrs Charles Wakefield.

Dinners

Lord Mayor of London
The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress gave a dinner last night at the Mansion House in honour of the Masters, Prime Wardens and Upper Bailiff of City Livery Companies and their escorts, the Sheriffs, Members of the Court of Aldermen and the Court of Common Council and Officers of the Corporation of London and their escorts. The Lord Mayor, the Master of the Mercers' Company and the Master of the Grocers' Company were the speakers. Among others present were:
The Bishop of Rochester and Mrs Nazir-Ali, Sir Peter Studd, Mrs Michael Bull, Sir Murray Fox, Miss Christine Fox, Sir Anthony and Lady Jolliffe and the Master and Mistress Cutler in Hallamshire.

Old Mancunians Association
The Chinese Ambassador was the principal guest at the annual dinner of the Old Mancunians Association, London section, held last night at Dartmouth House. Mr K.M. Robbie presided.

Association of London Clubs
Viscount Thurso was the guest of honour at the annual dinner of the Association of London Clubs held last night at the National Liberal Club. Mr Graham Snell, chairman of the association, presided. Lord Bramall, KG, the Hon Maurice Robson, Sir Richard Brooke, Sir Geoffrey Ellerton, Commodore Ian Pemberton and Air Vice-Marshal Keith Filbey were among those present.

The Highland Society of London
The President of The Highland Society of London, Mr Malcolm Innes, presided at the annual dinner held at the Caledonian Club on March 17. Admiral Sir Jock Slater proposed the toast to the *Immortal Memory* of General Sir Ralph Abercrombie and all Scotsmen who have died in defence of their country.

Chester Business Club
Mr John Monks, General Secretary of the TUC, was the guest of honour and principal speaker at a dinner of the Chester Business Club held last night at the Abbots Well Hotel, Chester. Mr Martin Seed, chairman, presided. Mr Tom Hunt, vice-president, and Mr Bob Clough-Parker, secretary, also spoke.

Durham University
Sir Robert May, Chief Scientific Adviser to Her Majesty's Government, was the guest speaker at the annual dinner of Durham University Society of Fellows held last night at the College of St Hild and St Bede, Durham. Professor Michael Prestwich, president of the society, was the host. The Mayor and Mayoress of Durham attended. The Vice-Chancellor and Warden of Durham University, the Dean of Durham and the Chairman of Northumbrian Water were among the guests.

Public Management and Policy Association
Mr Jack Cunningham, Minister for the Cabinet Office, and Professor Robert Worcester, Chairman of MORI, were the speakers at a lecture organised by the Public Management and Policy Association and sponsored by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy held on Wednesday evening at 1 Great George Street, London SW1. Mr Peter Kellner presided.

University news

Oxford
The Eldon Law Scholarship for 1999 has been awarded to Colin Thomann, Mansfield College.

Memorial service

The Duke of Rutland
The Queen was represented by Lieutenant-General Sir Richard Swinburn at a memorial service for the Duke of Rutland held yesterday in the Guards Chapel, Wellington Barracks.

Princess Margaret was represented by Lady Penn, Princess Alice Duchess of Gloucester and the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester by Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Simon Bland, Prince Michael of Kent by Lord Carrington, KG, CH, and Princess Alexandra by Colonel Shaun Longsdon.

The Rev Leslie Bryan, Chaplain to the Household Division, officiated, assisted by the Rev E.R. Urquhart, Vicar of Bakewell, Derbyshire, Canon A. Clayton, Chaplain of Belvoir, and the Very Rev Derek N. Hole, Provost of Leicester.

Lord Edward Manners, son, read the lesson and the Duke of Rutland, son, read *I Said to the Man at the Gate of the Year* by Minnie Louise Haskins. Lord Charteris of Amisfield gave an address. Lieutenant-Colonel C.J.E. Seymour, Regimental Adjutant, represented the Grenadier Guards. Among others present were:

Frances Duchess of Rutland (widow), Lady Charlotte Manners (daughter), Dr John and Lady Teresa Chipman (son-in-law and daughter), the Duchess of Rutland (daughter-in-law), Lord John Manners (brother), Lord and Lady Roger Manners (brother and sister-in-law), Lady Ursula D'Abo and Lady Isobel Throckmorton (sisters), Mr and Mrs Henry D'Abo, the Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, Mr William Guinness, Miss Phoebe Manners, Mr and Mrs Peveril Manners, Miss Lucy Manners, the Hon John and Mrs Ramsay, Mr and Mrs Brian Sweeny.

The Duke of Wellington, Anne Duchess of Rutland, the Duchess of Marlborough, Elizabeth Duchess of Northumberland, the Marchioness of Cholmondeley, the Marquess of Salisbury, the Countess of Caledon, the Countess of Dartmouth, the Earl and Countess of Gainsborough, the Earl and Countess of Wilton, Viscount Cranborne, Maria Carmela Viscountess Hambleden, Katharine Viscountess Macmillan of Ovenden, Lady Michael Cecil.

Lord Ashcombe, Lady Carrington, Lady Duncan-Sandys, Lady Elton, Anne Lady Elton, Lord and Lady Jeffreys, Lord and Lady Keith of Castleacre, Lord and Lady King of Wartnaby, Baroness Rawlings, the Dowager Lady Swaythling, Brigadier Lord and Lady Vivian, Baroness Willoughby de Eresby, Lady Elizabeth Clyde, Lady Annabel Lindsay, the Hon Dominic Elliot, the Hon David Macmillan, the Hon Mrs Sharples, the Hon Mrs van der Woude.

Sir Denis Thatcher and Baroness Thatcher, LG, OM, FRS, Sir Martyn Beckett, Sir Toby Clarke, Lady Colquhoun of Luss, Sir Reginald and Lady Sheffield, Sir Reresby Sitwell, Sir Benjamin Slade, Sir Jack Baer, Lady Swinburn, Major-General Sir Michael Carleton-Smith, Sir Michael Latham, Major-General Sir Brian Wyldbore-Smith, Major David and Lady Willa Chetwode, Major Charles and Lady Katherine Farrell, Mr and the Hon Mrs Michael Brand, Countess Esterhazy.

Mr Richard Adams, Mr David Anderson, Ms A Baker Wilbraham, Mr John Beveridge, QC, Brigadier A N Breitmeyer, Mr Edmund Brudenell, Major E J R de Lisle, Mr Alan Duncan, MP, Lieutenant-Colonel J R Everard, Mr Robert Hardy, Mr Simon Kenyon-Slaney, Mr Patrick McLoughlin, MP, Mr John Mills, Mr and Mrs John Sheffield, Mr and Mrs R Spencer Churchill, Mr Barry Theobald Hicks, Mrs Edward Remington-Hobbs, Ms Eleanor Thorneycroft, Mr Michael Tree, Colonel G W Tufnell, Mr Nicholas Turner, Mr Adam Twisleton-Wykeham-Fiennes, Mrs Diana Barnato Walker, Mr John Webster, Mr Michael Wilson and other members of the family, friends and former colleagues.

The College of Law

The Governors of The College of Law have appointed Mr Rodger Pannone to be their Chairman in succession to Sir Derek Bradbeer.

Legal appointments

Mr Roger Venne has been appointed the first Head of the Civil Appeals Office to support the Court of Appeal (Civil Division) in the Royal Courts of Justice.

Mr John Adams, former Registrar of Civil Appeals, has been promoted to the Circuit Bench and is now based at Barnet.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr P.F. Burton and Miss D.L. Spearing
The engagement is announced between Piers Fitzgerald, second son of Mr and Mrs Christopher Burton, of Woeful Lake House, Sherborne, Gloucestershire, and Debbie Louise, daughter of Mr and Mrs Victor Spearing, of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates.

Mr S.G. Dobbie and Miss H.A.McK. Cox
The engagement is announced between Stewart Geoffrey, younger son of Mr and Mrs Graham Dobbie, of Hartree, Peeblesshire, and Helen Ann McKay, daughter of Mr and Mrs Charles Cox, of Duddington, Northamptonshire.

Wing Commander M.V. Godfrey and Ms R.A. Radford
The engagement is announced between Malcolm Victor, son of Mr Desmond Godfrey and the late Mrs Godfrey, of Long Bennington, Nottinghamshire, and Rosemary Ann, youngest daughter of Alderman Major James and Mrs Buckee, of Kingswood, Bristol.

Mr J. Gore-Booth and Miss A.M. McConnell
The engagement is announced between Julian, son of Sir David Gore-Booth, of London, and Mrs Jilli Fortescue, née Valpy, of Majorca, and Amanda, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter McConnell, of Jamaica.

Dr L.E. James and Dr K.M.H. Moore
The engagement is announced between Laurence, elder son of Mr and Mrs Roger James, of London, and Katherine, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Kenneth Moore, of Grindleford, Derbyshire.

Mr J.J. Lawson and Miss M.R. Young
The engagement is announced between Justin, elder son of Mr and Mrs John Lawson, of Hurley, Berkshire, and Melanie, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs David Young, of Ashdon, near Saffron Walden, Essex.

Mr R. Raynor and Miss C. Heighway
The engagement is announced between Richard, son of Mr and Mrs William Raynor, of Chester, and Claire, second daughter of Mrs Anne-Marie Heighway, of Bray, and Mr John Heighway, of Windsor.

Mr B.R. Wyldbore-Smith and Miss P.S.M. Scott
The engagement is announced between Robin, son of Major-General Sir Brian and the Hon Lady Wyldbore-Smith, of Grantham, Lincolnshire, and Philippa, daughter of the late Mr Peter J.M. Scott and of Mrs Scott, of Roydon, Essex.

Mr M.E. Young and Miss C.J.S. Scopes
The engagement is announced between Michael, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Tony Young, of Kingswinford, West Midlands, and Charlotte, daughter of Mr and Mrs Herman Scopes, of Wargrave, Berkshire.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: David Livingstone, explorer, Low Blantyre, Lanarkshire, 1813; Sir Richard Burton, explorer and scholar, Torquay, 1821; Sergei Diaghilev, impresario, Novgorod, Russia, 1872; Sir John Marshall, archaeologist, Chester, 1876.

DEATHS: Arthur James Balfour, 1st Earl of Balfour, Prime Minister 1902-05, Woking, Surrey, 1930; Edgar Rice Burroughs, novelist, Encino, California, 1950.

According to Ptolemy, the Babylonians observed the first recorded eclipse, 721BC.

PERSONAL COLUMN

God did not call us to live in immorality, but in holiness. 1 Thessalonians 4.7 (GNB).

BIRTHS

BERGER - On the Ides of March 1999, to Dominic and Jane, a beautiful son, Sebastian Gabriel Sea, a brother for Kieron-Blue.

BRODERICK - On 14th March 1999, to Joanne (née Matt) and Sandy, a beautiful son, Hamish William Masson, 9lbs 1oz. A brother and playmate for Euan.

CHANCELLOR - On 11th March 1999 in Sydney, Australia, to Camilla (née Morgan) and Andrew, a daughter, Poppy Esma.

COSTELETOS - On March 14th at The Portland Hospital, to Katerina (née Flenga) and Philippe, a daughter, Marianna.

DORRELL - On March 11th to Annette and Stephen, a son, Christopher George Robert, a brother for Alexandra, Philip and William.

HALLIWELL - On 4th March at Clifton, to Vicky (née Brice) and Toby, a son, Charles Thomas (Charlie).

HOWARD - On Friday March 12th 1999 to Helen (née Garlick) and Richard, a daughter, Lillian Hope, a sister for Unity and William.

LAWRENCE - On March 4th 1999, to Kathryn (née Chessun) and Mark, a son, Thomas Henry William, a brother for Eleanor and Victoria.

LENTON - On March 13th at The Portland Hospital, to Paula and James, a daughter, Chloe Rose, a sister for Kezia Angel.

LONGDEN - On March 9th, to Joanna (née Seymour) and Mark, a daughter, Lara, a sister for Tatiana and Johnny.

MASTERTON - On 17th March, in Winchester, to Caroline (née Mayfield) and James, a son, a brother for Eliza and Sophie.

PANDIRI - On March 17th at The Portland Hospital, to Sujata and Samir, a son, Shaan, a brother for Shama and Shivani.

BIRTHS

REDDIEX - Glenn and Jane are pleased to announce the birth of their son Ethan Robert on 13th March 1999, 6lbs 5oz.

ROSEVEARE - On March 12th at the RHCH, Winchester, to Nicola and Christopher, a son, Matthew Joseph.

ROTHSCHILD - On 18th March, to Sarah (née Pelcner) and Christopher, a daughter, Leah Natasha Calypso.

SEAMAN - On Tuesday March 16th 1999 to Annabel (née Price) and Julian, a son, Wilfrid William.

SILCOCK - On March 10th 1999 at Cheltenham Hospital to Emma (née Williams) and Paul, a daughter, Rachel.

TREW - On Wednesday March 3rd 1999 at Farnborough Hospital, Kent, to Juliet (née Thompson) and David, beautiful twin daughters, Isobel Anna and Eleanor Daisy.

WATSON - On March 16th 1999, at home, to Annabel (née Scott) and Oliver, a daughter, Isabella Amelia Rose.

WHITE - On March 18th in Brisbane, Australia to Lucinda (née Dobbin) and Paul, a son, Charles William.

WHITESIDE - On March 15th, to Amanda (née Johnson) and Murray, a daughter, Zara Emily, as No:1.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

YOUNG - Leslie Terence. The family of the late Terry Young who fell asleep suddenly 27th February 1999 would like to thank family, friends and neighbours for their kindness, sympathy, floral tributes and cards sent to us at our sad and sudden loss of a dear husband, dad and grandad. Special thanks to our families. Maureen Young and family.

DEATHS

BEVERIDGE - On 17th March 1999 the Reverend Wilbert Esler (Bill) MA M.Litt. Loving husband of Ena, caring father of Martin, Ian and Joan and grandfather of Alistair. Funeral Service at St James' Pokesdown, Bournemouth on Tuesday 23rd March at 11.15 am, followed by cremation at Poole. No flowers, but donations if desired to the Childrens Society c/o George Scott, Funeral Directors, 13-15 Somerset Road, Bournemouth, BH7 6JH. Tel: 01202 395827.

BISHOP - Suddenly at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, on 12th March 1999, Raymond Charles Bishop A.C.P. aged 81. Much loved husband, father and grandfather. Private funeral has taken place.

CAMPBELL - Dr. Margaret Olivia Noel Campbell, Historian and one of the founding staff of Gordonstoun School. Died peacefully 15th March 1999 Edinburgh. Beloved wife of the late Keir A. Campbell DSO and mother of Diarmid, Felicity, Oran and Mary, beloved aunt of Hugh, Robin and David Campbell Byatt. Funeral at St John's Cathedral, Oban, 1 pm Saturday 20th March. Memorial Service in Edinburgh to be announced later. Family flowers only.

CRAWFORTH - Felicity Ann (née Chittenden) peacefully at home on 17th March. Beloved wife of Bill and mother of David and Emma. Funeral Service at St Mary's, Guildford on Wednesday 24th March at 2.30 pm. No flowers but donations may be made to Imperial Cancer Research Fund.

GODDARD - Gordon. On 12th March suddenly at the home of his daughter. Beloved husband of Brenda, adored father of Beverley and Roger, father-in-law of Jasper and Melanie and much loved Grandpa of Marcus, Rachel, Christopher, Oliver and Lucy. Funeral Service at Basingstoke Crematorium on 24th March at 12 noon. Family flowers only, donations if wished to British Heart Foundation c/o Jno Steel & Son, 6 Chesil Street, Winchester.

GOLDER - Arthur Reginald (George), born 1921, peacefully at home on March 16th. Funeral service 3.00pm, Tuesday 23rd March at Mortlake Crematorium. Family flowers or donations to preferred charity to T.H. Sanders and Sons, 28-30 Kew Road, Richmond, Surrey, 0181 948 1551.

GRIFFITHS - On 17th March 1999, peacefully at Worthing, Beryl Irene, aged 101. Widow of Air Commodore J Swire Griffiths and beloved mother of Pauline and Sheila. Funeral service at All Saints Church, Findon Valley on Thursday 25th March at 1.45pm followed by committal at Worthing Crematorium at 2.40pm. No flowers please but, if desired, donations to The Chestnut Tree House (Worthing Childrens Hospice Project) may be sent c/o H.D. Tribe Ltd, 130 Broadwater Road, Worthing. 01903 234516.

GRIFFITHS - Annie Davidson, on Tuesday 16th March 1999 aged 79 years. Mother of Linda Harrison and grandmother of Edward. Funeral Service in Landbeach Baptist Church on Monday 29th March at 11 am followed by private cremation. Donations to "Arthur Rank House" c/o Harry Williams & Sons, 7 Victoria Park, Cambridge.

HARPER - Brigadier John James Harper, MBE, MA, JP, DL, on 16th March 1999, aged 91. Beloved husband of Bobbie, dearly loved father of Susan and William and much loved grandfather and great grandfather. Former Headmaster of Tiffin School, 1947-1972. Service at St Barnabas Church, Ranmore at 3.30pm on Thursday 25th March after a private cremation. There will be a Memorial Service at Kingston Parish Church on a date to be announced. Family flowers only, but donations, if desired for Imperial Cancer Research Fund may be sent to Sherlock and Sons, Trellis House, Dorking, RH4 2ES.

HEDLEY - Peacefully on March 17th 1999 Katharine Mary of Barham after an illness borne with great courage. Beloved wife of the late Tim Hedley, much loved mother of Charlotte (Loyd), Simon and Mark. Also a greatly loved grandmother. Thanksgiving Service at Barham Church on Monday March 22nd at 12 noon, preceded by a private family service at Lympne Churchyard. Family flowers only, but donations if desired to RUKBA via C.W. Lyons, 70 Military Road, Canterbury CT1 1ND.

HERON - Edward (Ned) peacefully on 13th March 1999 aged 86. Funeral at St Bartholomews, Hyde, Winchester at 2pm on Thursday 25th March. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to Brendoncare c/o Steel & Sons, 6 Chesil Street, Winchester SO23 0HU.

HODGSON - Betty Alice peacefully in Torbay Hospital on 13th March 1999 aged 77 years. Funeral Service 2.15pm Friday March 26th at Oxford Crematorium. Flowers to Surman and Horwood Funeral Service, tel 01844 351323.

HUMPHREY - John Scott died on 6th March. The funeral has taken place in France. A service in his memory will be at Frinton Free Church, Connaught Avenue, Frinton-on-Sea, Essex on Thursday 25th March at 11 am. Donations, if desired to Countryside Alliance.

LLOYD - On 17th March, peacefully at University College Hospital, Rachel Dilys, wife of the late David Herbert Lloyd and mother of Lloyd and Huw. Service at the West Chapel, Golders Green Crematorium, 2.00pm Wednesday 24th March. Friends and neighbours welcome. Flowers or donations to be sent to Leverton and Sons, 212 Eversholt Street, London NW1. Donations to be made out to The University College Hospital Special Trustees.

MANTLE - Gwen died 18th March 1999 at Robinson House Bristol, aged 92, widow of Philip Mantle CMG, much loved mother to Pat Curtis and John Mantle, grandmother and great-grandmother. Funeral arrangements, cremation at South Bristol on Wednesday March 24th at 11.30am. Flowers to Co-operative Funeral Service, 513 Wells Road, Hengrove.

MARSTON - Anthony David. On 16th March in France suddenly whilst ski-ing with his family and friends. Cherished husband of Anne, beloved father of Caroline, James and Lucy and adored grandfather of Joshua, Barnabas and Eleanor. Long time Chairman of Marston Hotels, recent Chairman of Best Western U.K. and in his Presidential year of Hythe Rotary Club. Funeral arrangements to be advised - please phone 01303 262762. Family flowers only but donations if desired to the Rotary Club of Hythe for its nominated charities c/o Anne Marston, Marston Hotels, The Mews, Hythe, Kent CT21 6AQ.

METCALFE - David Bruce, suddenly at home on 17th March 1999 aged 77. Dearly loved by Felicity and by Jeremy, Jonathan, Pippa, Simon, Toby and all his family. He was so proud of his eight grandchildren. A loving brother of Penelope Hale. Served with The Gloucestershire Regt and The Corps of Queen's Messengers. Family funeral on Saturday 20th March followed by a Thanksgiving Service at Holy Trinity Church, Minchinhampton, Glos on Thursday 15th April at 3.00pm. Enquiries to Philip Ford & Son, Funeral Directors 01453 763592.

MIDDLETON - Sir Lawrence Monck, 10th Bt., 16th March 1999 peacefully at home. Enquiries c/o Forsey and Son (01458) 272297.

MILLER SMITH - Dorothy died peacefully at home, as she lived, with her family. Wife of Charles, mother of Nicholas, Caroline and Fiona, and grandmother of Emily. Funeral service at St Michael's, Chester Square, SW1, on Friday 26th March 1999 at 2.30 pm for family and close friends. Family flowers only but donations, if desired, to Action against Breast Cancer, C2 Culham Science Centre, Oxfordshire OX14 3OB. Thanksgiving service on Tuesday 11th May 1999 at St Michael's, Chester Square, SW1, at 11.30 am. All friends invited.

PADEN - Valerie Justine on 16th March 1999, suddenly and tragically at her home in Peel, Isle of Man, aged 34. Formerly of Prestwich, Manchester. Midwife at Nobles Hospital, Douglas. Formerly with Royal Bank of Scotland, Islington. Precious daughter of John and Linda, and sister of Elisabeth, Port St Mary, Isle of Man. Requiem mass being arranged: Enquiries 01624 813114.

ROBINSON - Dr. John Sherborne, husband of Melinda, father of David and Charles, died aged 64 on March 16th after a short illness. Funeral Service at St Mary's Church, Kemsing, Kent on Wednesday 24th March. Family flowers only please, donations to the Royal London Society for the Blind or charity of choice. All enquiries to W. Hodges, 89 St Johns Hill, Sevenoaks, tel: (01732) 454457.

SCOTT - Fulwell, Sunderland. Peacefully in hospital after a long illness, borne bravely on March 16th, aged 76 years, Frank. Member of FOS 266 Mess. Very dear and beloved husband of Hazel, very much loved father of Marilyn, Keith and Michelle, dearest father-in-law of Andy and Betty, loving Grandpa of Cameron, Francesca, Austen and Alister, dearest brother of Jean, Marina and the late Joyce, also a dear brother-in-law. Would friends please meet for Service at Sunderland Crematorium on Tuesday March 23rd at 1.00pm. Family flowers only please. Donations if desired to Cancer Research, c/o The Manager, Lloyds Bank, Sea Road, Fulwell, Sunderland. Enquiries to CW Tait Funeral Directors, 48 Roker Avenue. Tel 0191 510 2944. Frank will be very sadly missed by all.

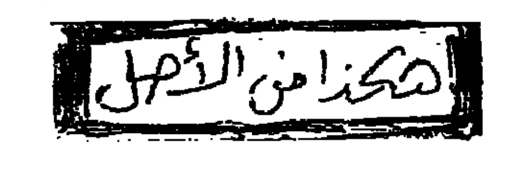
SLOMAN - William Owen M.B.E. of Cottenham passed away peacefully on Monday March 15th 1999 aged 77 years. Funeral Service at Cambridge City Crematorium West Chapel on Thursday March 25th 1999 at 1.30 pm. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to R.N.L.I. on the day or c/o Willingham Funeral Service, Berrycroft, Willingham, Cambs. CB4 5JX.

SANGSTER - Richard "Hugh" Bethune Sangster, of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, passed away in his sleep after a great ski trip with old friends on March 6th, 1999. Dearly beloved husband and best friend of Hazel; loving and much loved father of Claire, Anna and Malcolm; precious son of Robert and Una Sangster of Edinburgh, Scotland; son-in-law of the late Alastair and Putzi Brown of Stirling, Scotland. Born in Scotland on March 26th, 1946, brought up in Scotland and East Africa, Hugh was educated at Merchiston Castle School and Edinburgh University graduating with an Honors Degree in Civil Engineering. He emigrated to Canada in 1970, pursuing a career in the Canadian energy field. At the time of his death, he was President of Enbridge International Inc. and Enbridge Technology Inc. Caring friend to so many, old and young, across the world, considerate colleague, committed volunteer, and above all, wonderful father and husband. He will be desperately missed. A Memorial Service to Celebrate Hugh's Life will be held at Riverview United Church (824 Imperial Way S.W.) on Friday, March 12th, 1999 at 2.00 pm, with the Rev. Rita M. Cattell officiating. If friends so desire, memorial tributes can be made directly to the Hospice Calgary Foundation, #300, 828-12 Avenue, S.W., Calgary, AB T2R 0H6, and/or the Calgary Opera Association, #601, 237-8 Avenue S.E., Calgary, AB T2G 5C3 (on whose boards Hugh worked tirelessly) and/or the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Alberta, 1825 Park Road S.E., Calgary, AB T2G 3Y6. In living memory of Hugh Sangster, a tree will be planted at Fish Creek Provincial Park by McInnis & Holloway Funeral Homes, "Park Memorial Chapel", 5008 Elbow Drive S.W., Calgary, Telephone: (403) 243-8200.

TUNNICLIFFE - On 15th March, suddenly at home in Holland, after a long illness so bravely borne, Michael John Tunnicliffe, aged 59, much loved husband of Rosemary and father of James and Kate. Funeral Mass at St Helen's Church, Westcliff on Sea at 9 am on Tuesday 23rd March, followed by cremation at Southend on Sea Crematorium. Flowers to the church, or donations to Amnesty International. Enquiries to F.P. Gulver & Sons Ltd; 01702 467426.

WILLIS - On March 16th suddenly after a long illness, Frank, 51 formerly of the ITC. Funeral service on March 24th at St Marylebone Crematorium, East End Road, N2 at 2.30pm. No flowers please. Donations to Eden Hall Marie Curie Centre, c/o Leverton and Sons Ltd, 0181 444 5753.

WILSON - Barbara (née Porter). Peacefully at Amesbury Abbey Nursing Home, Wiltshire on 16th March in her 93rd year. Widow of Col. Douglas Thorburn, DSO, OBE, MC, Highland Light Infantry and of Col. Alan Wilson, OBE, MC Royal Engineers. Late of Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, her birthplace and home for many years. Greatly loved mother of Elizabeth (Dickins) and Robin, grandmother of seven and great-grandmother of three. Also much loved stepmother and step-grandmother to her extended family of Ciorachs and Wilsons. She will be greatly missed. Funeral Service at St Peter's, Berkhamsted at 11.00am, Friday 26th March, thereafter private committal at Chilterns Crematorium. Family flowers only please. Donations if desired to British Red Cross, c/o Malcolm Jones and Metcalfe, 284 High Street, Berkhamsted. Tel 01442 864848.



OBITUARIES

ROD HULL

Rod Hull, entertainer, died after a fall from a ladder on March 17 aged 63. He was born on August 13, 1935.

IN HARNESS with his absurd avian accomplice, the mute but aggressive glove puppet Emu, Rod Hull made himself a fairly effortless career as television's most famous irritant. The victims of this ill-behaved pair were legion, since neither was any respecter of persons. Thus, when Emu met the Queen Mother at a Royal Variety show in 1972 he proceeded to browse on her bouquet. Her Majesty bore the imposition with equanimity.

The most notorious occasion on which Hull and Emu made one of the great and good lose his rag was the day they set about Michael Parkinson on the great man's own chat show. The air on the set was perilously close to turning blue as Emu first developed an unhealthy obsession with the regions below the waistband of Parkinson's trousers, then proceeded to wrestle the chat show host to the ground and finally ate his shoe.

Hull and his psychopathic puppet were totally unrepentant. Their behaviour was, after all, par for the course. Parkinson was rueful but magnanimous in discomfiture: "The only thing I'll ever be remembered for is being attacked by that **** Emu," he said later.

Rod Hull was born on the Isle of Sheppey where by all accounts he grew up a painfully shy child with a stammer. To cure himself he joined a local concert party at 15. But a showbusiness career did not blossom until after he emigrated to Australia with his first wife, Sandra, and young family in 1958 after completing his National Service and qualifying as an electrician.

This skill got him a job on the technical side in a new Australian television studio, but it was not long before he was writing scripts and hosting a children's show. In 1969 he found Emu languishing in the props room of the studio and rescued him from oblivion. It was the start of a relationship from which he was never to be allowed to look back. Soon the pair were cosying up to each other and making life a misery for everyone around them.

In 1970 Hull returned to Britain with his second wife, Cher, whom he had met and married while on tour in Australia. In an astonishingly short time he and the gangling, unmannerly fowl became a national institution on television, with a brand of rough-and-tumble knockabout gags that somehow appealed to the young without scandalising the old.

Emu and his manipulator could always be guaranteed to bring out the worst in each other, and their anarchic behaviour was a refreshing change from the somewhat standardised TV studio "good taste" of the day. No one who ventured within range of them was safe from indignity.

Besides Hull's own shows — *Rod Hull and Emu*, *Emu's World*, *EBC* (Emu's Broadcasting Company) and *EMU-TV* — the pair made guest appearances at Royal Variety performances, on *This is Your Life*, the Parkinson show and many others, and were a great hit as far afield as Hollywood.

The Seventies and Eighties were Hull's heyday, but difficult times lay ahead. In 1986 he bought a 32-room Elizabethan mansion in Kent for £350,000 with the aim of restoring it. By this time he was winding down his showbusiness career and hoping for a peaceful, bucolic retirement.

But a large unpaid tax bill and other debts compelled him to sell the house in a climate of falling prices, after he had spent £250,000 on it. In 1994 he was declared bankrupt and had also to sell a villa he had bought in Portugal. His second wife took the three children of their marriage to Australia where, after the conclusion of his bankruptcy case, Hull joined them. But he became homesick for England and after three months returned to this country where he moved into a small cottage in East Sussex.

There he lived quietly, walking, reading, writing poetry and tending his vegetable garden. But he had plans to revive his showbusiness career. He had recently been seen in pantomime in Windsor and had made attempts to revive his act with Emu.

There were two daughters of his first marriage, which was dissolved, and two sons and a daughter of his second.



Bringing out the worst in each other: Hull and friend, 1980

HARRY CALLAHAN

Harry Callahan, American photographer and teacher, died on March 15 aged 86. He was born in Detroit on October 22, 1912.

In 1985 a survey of postwar American photography at the Barbican Art Gallery caused an outcry of indignation among British critics. Why were there so few photographers of comparable merit in Britain when the same period had produced a surfeit of American talent? One plausible answer was that British photography had no Harry Callahan.

Apart from his work, which was widely shown following his first exhibition in 1946 at New York's Museum of Modern Art, Callahan was a hugely influential teacher. In 1946 Arthur Siegel invited him to join László Moholy-Nagy's New Bauhaus at the Institute of Design in Chicago, where he teamed up with the Abstract Expressionist photographer Aaron Siskind. He taught there until 1961, when he left to found a photography department at the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence. Many of the succeeding generation of American artist-photographers attended these schools of now almost mythical reputation. Although no scholar himself, Callahan had an intuitive intelligence and his teaching philosophy was to encourage experiment.



Intensity and concentration: Harry Callahan seen at at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1951

He attended a public (ie, state) school in Royal Oak, Michigan, after which he studied engineering, though for three semesters only, at Michigan State University. In 1930 he began work for Chrysler Motors in Detroit. He was a slow starter in photography, which he took up as a hobby in 1938 and which came as the answer to a long search for "something to believe in". He worked briefly in the photography laboratories of General Motors before meetings with Ansel Adams and Alfred Stieglitz, both of whom he revered, encouraged him to pursue an individual course. Adams especially taught him that you did not have to visit Yellowstone to be a great landscape photographer. Landscape might exist in a footprint on barren ground or, as Callahan soon discovered, in shimmering reflections on water.

He knew he was on the right lines when anthropomorphic references began to surface in his work; for example, the ease with which thick, windswept grasses suggested tresses of hair. He was never certain in his own mind quite what made images work: "I just don't know what makes a picture, really — the thing that makes it is something unique."

Callahan's subjects soon became more varied as he followed his hunches. He was always willing to attempt different, sometimes conflicting, approaches: "I wanted to be a big artist, so I wanted to do everything." As a result his style is hard to summarise. If constant threads run through his oeuvre, they are, first, a strong sense of abstract design in which each element of the print contributes clearly; and, secondly, a belief that a picture must signify more than is instantly apparent on the surface. Whether it be in the series of sophisticated "snapshot" pictures of his wife Eleanor and daughter Barbara, or his erotically charged multiple exposures, or the spare, calligraphic drawings of dead stalks of grass in the snow, the quiet testing and pushing of photography's ability to make symbols is everywhere evident. With characteristic humility Callahan made no claims for his own efforts: "I don't think anything I do has any monumental thought in any way." Nevertheless, the picture had to convey the right intensity and concentration.

In 1950 he made his most celebrated images, a sequence of furtive, close-up heads of pedestrians walking alone along State Street, Chicago. He homed in on women deep in thought and caught them unawares, thus revealing the expressive outer face of inner feelings and anxieties. In this and other essays during the 1940s and 1950s, he helped to keep alive the tradition of fine-art photography while many contemporaries went over to social documentary for the new and popular (and well-paid) picture magazines. As his work testifies, Callahan was quietly uncompromising.

He retired from teaching in 1977 to concentrate on colour photography. He had photographed in colour since 1940 but rarely exhibited this — in those days — unfashionable work. These pictures focus on the formal properties of wooden buildings, often the gaily painted clapboard houses around Cape Cod.

In 1978 he became the first American photographer to represent his country at the Venice Biennale. Fame in Britain arrived late, however, and it was not until 1985, when the Welsh Arts Council organised a touring retrospective, that British audiences were introduced to his work in anything resembling comprehensive depth.

He once said that if he had any ambition, it was to "touch the spirit in people". Quiet, tongue-tied and humble, he was liked and respected by all who met him. After his retirement he remarked that his "life outside photography hasn't been such a big deal". He moved to Atlanta, Georgia, in the mid-1980s to be near his daughter and continued his photography until he suffered a stroke in 1997.

He is survived by his wife and most devoted model, Eleanor Knapp, whom he married in 1936, and by their daughter Barbara.

GERHARD HERZBERG

Gerhard Herzberg, spectroscopist, died in Ottawa on March 3 aged 94. He was born in Hamburg on December 25, 1904.

A PIONEER in the development of spectroscopy for the study of molecules, Gerhard Herzberg was not only pre-eminent in the field, but for many years he *was* the field. His books defined the subject, and at the National Research Council in Ottawa he established a laboratory that led the world. As a naturalised Canadian who made his affection for his adopted country plain, Herzberg became a father figure to Canadian science, and continued working productively until the age of 90.

He was born in Hamburg, and soon showed promise. At the age of 12 he and a friend, Alfred Schulz, built their own telescope, grinding the lenses and mounting them in a metal tube. On clear nights they would take a tram to the city park and study the Moon and planets. But when he applied to Hamburg Observatory for a job, he was told: "There is no point in thinking of a career in astronomy unless one has private means of support."

His support came from his mother, widowed when he was ten, and a private scholarship from a German industrialist. He entered the Technical University at Darmstadt to study physics in 1924 and within four years he had completed his doctorate and published 12 papers in atomic and molecular physics. He won a post-doctoral fellowship at Göttingen, working under Max Born and James Franck. He then spent a year at the University of Bristol, before returning to Darmstadt.

In 1934, warned that he would be dismissed because his wife was Jewish, Herzberg appealed for help to the President of the University of Saskatchewan, Walter Murray, through a young scientist who had studied with him in Darmstadt. Murray wrote to both the University of Toronto and the National Research Council, saying that if they could not offer Herzberg a job, the University of Saskatchewan would do so, despite a desperate shortage of money.

The Herzbergs arrived in Saskatoon in September 1935 "with $2.50 in my pocket", as Herzberg later recalled. He stayed for ten years, during which his classic books *Atomic Spectra and Atomic Structure* (1936) and *Molecular Spectra and Molecular Structure* (1939) were published.



Spectroscopy is the use of light to identify atoms and molecules by the frequencies they emit or absorb. Herzberg used the technique to study many molecules, including those that make only a fleeting appearance in the course of a chemical reaction. In the autumn of 1959 his team finally captured the spectrogram of methylene, a highly unstable "free radical" consisting of a carbon atom with two hydrogen atoms attached.

It had taken him 18 years, but proving that it existed — even for a fraction of a second — was the key to understanding many chemical reactions.

For this, and studies on more than 30 other free radicals, he won the 1971 Nobel Prize for Chemistry. He was in Leningrad on a lecture tour and, given no more than the bare notification that he had won, assumed that the prize was for physics. By then he had also realised his ambition to become an astronomer, serving for three years as Professor of Spectroscopy at the Yerkes Observatory in Chicago. But he missed Canada, and found the atmosphere of McCarthy America reminiscent of prewar Germany. He returned to the NRC in Ottawa in 1948, where he remained for the rest of his long life.

The beauty of spectroscopy is that distance is no obstacle, so that light from distant stars can be analysed and used to determine their structure. Herzberg found that a rare form of carbon exists in comets, and discovered free radicals in interstellar gas and hydrogen in the atmospheres of some planets.

He remained throughout his life a scientist's scientist, untempted by celebrity. He resisted efforts by bureaucrats to channel spending only towards applied research for which an application could be identified. "You shouldn't do science just to improve wealth," he said. "Do science for the sake of human culture and knowledge."

Modest and cheerful, he was fond of music and at one stage in his life had contemplated becoming an opera singer.

Working on past the age of 65 with the agreement of the NRC, he discovered the spectrum of triatomic hydrogen in his eighties, and did not officially retire until he was 90.

His first wife Luise died in 1971. He is survived by his second wife Monika, and a son and daughter.

PROFESSOR RONALD WILLETTS

Ronald Willetts, Professor of Greek at Birmingham University, 1970-80, died on February 19 aged 83. He was born on April 2, 1915.

RONALD WILLETTS was a classical scholar and Hellenist with a wide range of interests and expertise. His scholarship was founded on a deep commitment to the Greek language and Greek literature, but as his published work shows, he was equally at home as an ancient historian and philologist.

Ronald Frederick Willetts went up to Birmingham University in the 1930s from Halesowen Grammar School, and read Classics in a lively department of Greek headed by E. R. Dodds, who was succeeded, on his election in 1936 to the Oxford chair, by Professor George Thomson. Both men greatly influenced Willetts.

Amid the intellectual ferment of the 1930s, Willetts was involved in left-wing and anti-Nazi political groups; Birmingham University was then also the focus of a thriving community of the arts, particularly with the poet Louis MacNeice as a lecturer in the Department of Greek.

After graduating, Willetts taught for a year before serving with the Army in India and Burma from 1940 to 1946. In hospital in India he was nursed by Jane Dann, whom he married in 1945.

At the end of the war Willetts returned to Birmingham as lecturer in Greek, rising eventually to be chairman of the School of Hellenic and Roman Studies. He was the leading authority on the history and society of later Ancient Crete, on which he published two books early in his career. He also wrote papers on Ancient Cyprus, including one that threw light on Homer's baffling references to double door locking mechanisms, which he had been to investigate on a door from a village house in the Museum of Nicosia.

But Willetts also had wider interests. He wrote on Ancient Greek dance and the Ancient Greek dialects, and on Aristophanes and Euripides — both of whom he translated for stage productions.

He wrote poetry of his own, publishing seven volumes between 1960 and 1994. Some of the poems were inspired by his love of the Greek poets, especially Homer and Aeschylus; a few reflected his experience of war in the East; many drew on his travels, expressing moments of insight and emotional response in Greece and the islands that he loved.

As well as former students, who were grateful for the way his teaching brought Greek literature and thought to life, his friends included many from across the range of university faculties and in the arts. He was for five years the Public Orator of Birmingham University.

In the last few years, as his health failed, he was sustained by the devotion of his wife, who survives him together with their daughter.

ON THIS DAY

March 19, 1920

In 1917 the War Cabinet approved the formation of a National War Museum. What later became the Imperial War Museum in London is now visited by 500,000 people a year.

IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

IT IS surprising that in London Wellington's campaigns are only commemorated by some five field guns and 200 cuirasses, and all of Marlborough's campaigns are represented by a pair of kettledrums and two field guns, these relics being preserved in the Tower of London, together with a few but priceless specimens of armour. The war of the last five years has been of such a nature that it should be recorded by the means of tangible objects for all time.

On March 17, 1917, the War Cabinet approved the formation of a National War Museum for the collection and preservation of trophies, books, maps, posters, works of art, and other material, and at a later date the title was altered to the Imperial War Museum.

A committee, representing the Admiralty, War Office, Air Force, Ministry of Munitions, Library and Art, have been for three years collecting material . . .

As the time progressed the Services showed keen interest in collecting for the museum, and on the naval side many valuable historical objects were deposited, including guns and other relics from the *Vindictive* and ships in action at Zeebrugge, from submarines, from the ill-fated *Hampshire* and *Lusitania*, together with many scientific instruments. For the models of ships the museum authorities are under a great obligation to the various shipbuilding firms, who generously contributed more than 50 magnificent scale models, ranging from battleships to trawlers. The submarine warfare is exemplified by a large section model showing the interior of a submarine, this illustration being amplified by actual fittings from some of the surrendered submarines.

On the Army side the regiments have contributed a number of trophies captured by their several battalions, and an extremely interesting and valuable collection of models has been formed showing trench warfare. A model in course of construction illustrates the landing at Gallipoli, and a relief map over 100ft. long showing the British front in March, 1918. From the Tank Headquarters representative examples of mechanical warfare have been received, and here again the models are employed to show the various operations employed in tank warfare . . .

The section devoted to women's work must overlap that of munitions to a certain extent but it will be of incalculable interest in the future not only from an historical point of view, but also for economic reasons, to see the large amount of lathe and mechanical work which was produced by women only during the war. The Records, which in many cases will not be suitable for exhibition, form a very large section of the Museum and comprise innumerable Army reports, orders and memoranda. The records of the Women's Section give a very complete history of women's work and dilution in factories.

To continue storing all these exhibits in separate buildings became impossible, and it was therefore decided to rent certain portions of the Crystal Palace so that the whole collection might be adequately shown. It is hoped to open the exhibition in May.

NEWS

Dome tickets to cost up to £20

The Millennium Dome will be Britain's most expensive tourist attraction, with adults paying £20 each for full-price tickets. Admission prices for the £758 million exhibition announced by the New Millennium Experience Company are particularly steep for the elderly. Single pensioners must pay £18 for a ticket — a discount of just 10 per cent .... Page 1

Times tipster's 3,000-1 treble

The final day of the Cheltenham National Hunt Festival was a triumph for the trainer Paul Nicholls and for *The Times* racing tipster Rob Wright. Nicholls produced See More Business to win the Tote Gold Cup at 16-1, part of a treble for Wright who also tipped Anzum for the Bonusprint Stayers' Hurdle and Space Trucker for the Grand Annual Chase. An investment of £1 on the three horses would have won £3,136.50........ Page 1

Lorry protest

Defiant ministers held firm last night over £2billion of motoring tax increases despite threats from protesting lorry drivers to bring London to a standstill........ Page 2

Balloon triumph

Brian Jones, 51, has piloted the *Breitling Orbiter 3* to within one day and under three thousand miles of going round the world in a balloon........ Page 3

GM food penalties

Shops and supermarkets face fines of up to £5,000 from today if they fail to label any food which contains genetically modified soya and maize........ Page 4

Falling angels

The Roman Catholic church is diluting its belief in angels and strengthening opposition to executions — but masturbation is no longer always a sin........ Page 5

Denning, the sleuth

The late Lord Denning trapped the infamous "headless man" into revealing his role in the scandalous 1963 divorce of the Duke and Duchess of Argyll, her biographer says today........ Page 8

Funeral anger

Rosemary Nelson, the human rights lawyer, was buried after a funeral in Lurgan, Co Armagh, that doubled as a demonstration of nationalist anger........ Page 9

Bedroom culture

Parents are giving their children more televisions, videos, computers and CD players to use in their bedrooms to compensate for their restricted lifestyles........ Page 10

Rubella alert

There is a growing danger of an epidemic of rubella because the proportion of infants being immunised has been falling for more than four years........ Page 13

Santer attacked

Members of the independent inquiry which brought down the European Commission attacked Jacques Santer and his team for rejecting their verdict........ Page 15

Naked politics

Russian insomniacs raised eyebrows as they watched grainy footage of Yuri Skuratov, the Prosecutor-General, cavorting naked across their television screens with two young women... Page 16

Body parts scandal

Egypt's establishment moved with rare alacrity to try to scotch allegations that 25 children had been sold to hospitals and killed for their body parts........ Page 17

Slavery allegation

A high-ranking Burundian civil servant at Unesco in Paris has been deprived of diplomatic immunity amid accusations that he enslaved his niece........ Page 19

New incident on the Yangtze

■ In an extraordinary gesture of goodwill two admirals from Britain and China marked the events that followed the Communists' shelling of the frigate, *HMS Amethyst*, in the Yangtze River 50 years ago. *Admiral Sir Michael Boyce Admiral Zhao Guojun*, dropped a wreath into the muddy waters of the Yangtze to honour the 17 British and Chinese who died........ Pages 1, 14



A boy jumps from a statue of Davie Cooper, the Scottish footballer who died aged 39 in 1995, at an unveiling in Hamilton, his home town

BUSINESS

In the red: Rover, the troubled UK car manufacturer, incurred losses of £645 million last year, BMW disclosed........ Page 27

Oil rises: The sharp recovery in oil prices continued as Saudi Arabia, the world's largest producer, moved to implement a substantial cut in output........ Page 27

No party: Hanover International, the four-star hotel operator, is to close its hotels over the new year after concluding that staff and entertainment costs would outweigh the benefits of staying open for millennium festivities........ Page 27

Markets: The FTSE100 fell 26.3 to 6114.3. The pound rose .05 cents to $1.6302 and .15p to 67.40p against the euro. The pound index rose to 102.5 from 102.4........ Page 30

SPORT

Football: Kevin Keegan used his first England squad announcement to rehabilitate players such as Chris Sutton, Ray Parlour and Andy Cole........ Page 52

Boxing: Lennox Lewis called on Evander Holyfield to give him the World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation belts the world thinks are his.... Page 50

Rugby union: Massimo Giovanelli, the Italy captain, is certain to be picked to play against Wales after a ban for stamping was overturned on a technicality........ Page 49

Olympic Games: Statistics show that The IOC has total savings of £135 million and that £137,000 was spent by its president, Juan Antonio Samaranch, on living expenses in Lausanne in 1998........ Page 49

ARTS

Strewth: "I wish I could come to Australia's aid, in this hour of crisis, by offering my own views on *Lolita*, but I can't." Richard Morrison on movie madness........ Page 35

Parody parade: For 17 years Gerard Alessandrini's show *Forbidden Broadway* has fed New York appetites for showbiz morsels; now London can share the jokes.... Page 36

Pop 1: David Sinclair reviews the week's new pop albums, from Skunk Anansie's diminished *Post Orgasmic Chill* to Tim Rice and Elton John's *Aida*........ Page 37

Pop 2: Heroin is a mug's game, says Caitlin Moran, so why do so many stars of the world of pop still play it? Plus: the work of Craig Armstrong, possibly Britain's busiest musician........ Page 37

FEATURES

Potted: Jane Shilling finds a source for pots that placate her fantasy of French style........ Page 20

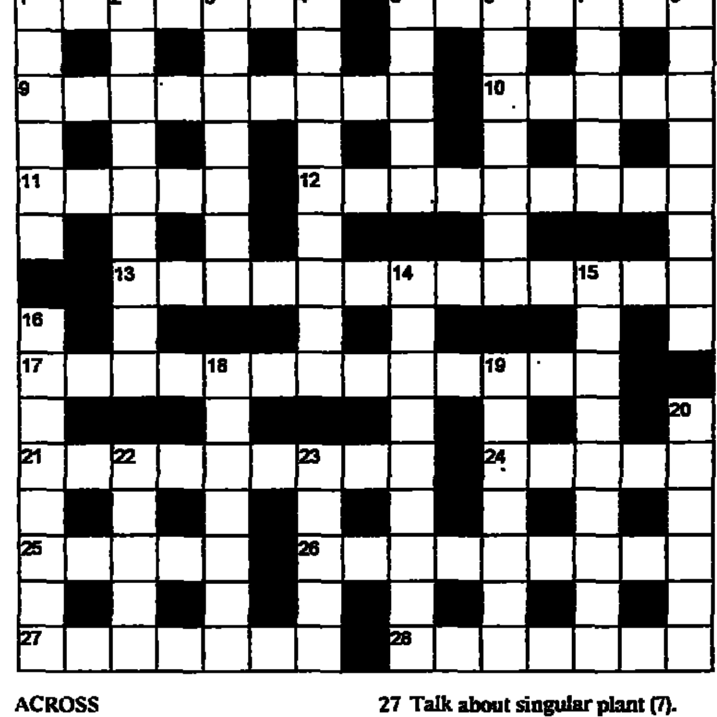
Bewitching: Phyllis Curott is a trained lawyer. She is also a witch. She laughs at remarks about newts and broomsticks. But the high priestess takes her new calling very seriously........ Page 21

Raymond Snoddy: "ITV is cock-a-hoop over the performance of its new schedule, post-News at Ten. Helped by movie premieres, the network raced to its best performance *for four years*"........ Page 39

Lifesavers: Anthony Porter was days away from execution when four journalism students were given his case to study........ Page 41

Brain power: Many [illegible] parents are becoming convinced by recent research that shows that classical music can boost a child's general intelligence........ Page 43

There's good news and bad news about the Olympic scandals. The good news is that the IOC expelled six of its members identified as having taken bribes to award the 2002 Winter Games to Salt Lake City. The bad news is that IOC Chairman Juan Antonio Samaranch is around — *New York Post*



RADIO & TV

Preview: Contestants trade in their old cars: *Trading Up* (Channel 4, 8pm) **Review:** Let's face it, these people are nerds, says Paul Hoggart of *Top Gear*........ Pages 50, 51

OPINION

Always with us

The substance of the Prime Minister's speech was somewhat more significant than the soundbite that accompanied it........ Page 23

Russia's ring

Weeks of rumours that Mr Yeltsin was planning to sack his centrist Prime Minister, the Soviet-era grandee Yevgeni Primakov, were denied this week by both President and Prime Minister........ Page 23

Genetic menu

The intention here is noble enough. But it may be too late. Many people are convinced that GM foods are a threat both to their health, and to the environment........ Page 23

SIMON JENKINS

Bill Clinton flashed his sequins, danced a jig and put some more bourbon on ice. Resolving Northern Ireland has always seemed that simple to the expatriate Irish of America........ Page 22

BERNARD CONNOLLY

If Europe is evolving at all, it is evolving not towards a nation-state but towards an empire, along the lines of the Prussian-dominated Wilhelmine bureaucratic Reich. It thus threatens to provide the worst of all worlds........ Page 22

WILLIAM TREVOR

There was murder in Mayfair, on trains, in airships, in Palm Court lounges, between acts. We had nothing like it in West Cork........ Page 22

Rod Hull, entertainer; **Harry Callahan**, photographer; **Gerhard Herzberg**, scientist; **Ronald Willetts**, classical scholar........ Page 25

EU reform; Argyll case headless man; Prescott's trip to India; Pilate and crucifixion; four-legged chickens; Gainsborough portrait; tango revival; signs of spring........ Page 23

1, 7, 29, 38, 45, 46. Bonus: 35

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,055

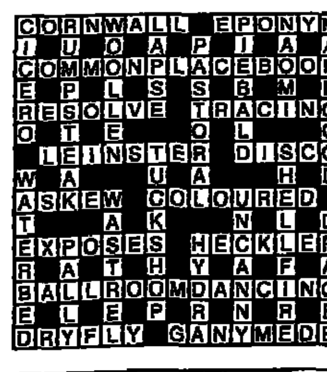
ACROSS

1 I am old-fashioned – you can't get away from it (7).
5 Study a lot of pupils fit in (7).
9 Senior policeman competes noisily for control (9).
10 Articles made of wood – about ten, at the outside (5).
11 From America, detective policeman in training (5).
12 Separate pan (4,5).
13 Poet spurned me – ends in trouble (6,7).
17 Popular song whose theme involved love and me (4,5,4).
21 Blunt, to no avail (9).
24 Almost overlooked surrender (5).
25 Arrive at church to marry (5).
26 Quiet new editor brought in, for example (9).
27 Talk about singular plant (7).
28 What's missing from front of book? An insect (7).

DOWN

1 Monarch, for example, belonging to religious group (6).
2 Dreadfully pampered, I fancy (4,5).
3 Ignorant people turned up – run a limited class (7).
4 Being without is, to a number, extremely credible (9).
5 Part of face, i.e. lip (5).
6 Fruit with covering one's called bananas? (7).
7 It's the last time doctor goes climbing (5).
8 Minister, a politician making threats (8).
14 Lush, very large mountain-top, as it were (2,2,5).
15 A flightless bird ran round to lead attack (9).
16 Meat cut into small pieces quickly (4-4).
18 Shoulder bag let cash become disorganised (7).
19 Eccentric back in the police station? (7).
20 Offensive – enemy departs after it's over (6).
22 Heads off inland, not the easiest route to Bury (5).
23 My pet is lost – you might get a reward if it's returned (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 21,054



Times Two Crossword, page 52

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

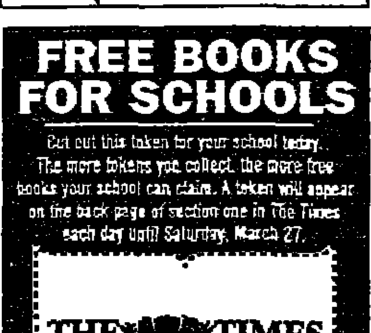
Sun rises: 6.06 am — Sun sets: 6.11 pm

Moon sets: 8.29 pm — Moon rises: 7.15 am

First quarter March 24

London 6.11 pm to 6.04 am
Bristol 6.21 pm to 6.14 am
Edinburgh 6.24 pm to 6.16 am
Manchester 6.20 pm to 6.13 am
Penzance 6.33 pm to 6.26 am





WEATHER

☐ **General:** England and Wales cool and breezy, mostly dry. Elsewhere light rain and wintry showers. Tonight: Scotland and N Ireland mostly cloudy with patchy rain falling as snow across mountains. Some cloud and light rain will spread into N England. Elsewhere dry with a slight ground frost.

☐ **London, SE England, E Anglia, E and W Midlands:** breezy, sunny spells and isolated showers. Moderate NW breeze. Max 12C (54F).

☐ **SW and Central S England, Channel Islands:** largely dry with sunny spells but breezy. Moderate NW breeze. Max 12C (54F).

☐ **E, NE and Central N England:** windy, mostly dry, sunny spells. Fresh NW wind. Max 11C (52F).

☐ **S and N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man:** sunny spells and showers, cloudy in afternoon. Moderate to fresh NW wind. Max 12C (54F).

☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee:** sunny spells, rain possible in afternoon. Moderate to fresh NW wind. Max 10C (50F).

☐ **Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** windy with sleet and snow showers. Strong to near-gale NW wind. Max 7C (45F).

☐ **SW and NW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Argyll:** sunny spells in morning, then largely cloudy with light rain turning to snow on high ground. Fresh NW wind. Max 8C (46F).

☐ **N Ireland:** mainly cloudy, light rain spreading east. Fresh NW wind. Max 11C (52F)

☐ **Irish Republic:** bright intervals, mainly dry. Moderate NW wind. Max 13C (55C).

☐ **Outlook:** Scotland and N Ireland sunny spells and wintry showers, England and Wales cloudy with patchy rain in north.



Changes to chart below from noon: low Y will move north, filling; low Z will move slowly northeast; high H will remain in situ

AROUND BRITAIN

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gales; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	8.7	0.01	11	52	s
Anglesey	9.4	0.01	10	50	s
Aspatria	7.7	0.16	11	52	sh
Aviemore	5.8	0.09	8	46	h
Belfast	6.6	0.03	10	50	sh
Birmingham	4.8	-	10	50	b
Bognor R	7.8	0.01	15	59	s
Bournemth	9.5	0.01	16	61	s
Bristol	7.1	-	13	55	s
Buxton	4.4	0.03	8	46	b
Cardiff	7.5	-	14	57	s
Clacton	4.3	0.01	12	54	r
Colwyn Bay	7.8	0.02	10	50	s
Cromer	5.5	0.02	9	48	s
Eastbourne	1.8	-	14	57	b
Edinburgh	8.5	0.04	11	52	c
Eskdalemuir	6.8	0.17	8	46	sh
Exmouth	7.6	-	13	55	s
Fishguard	9.8	0.01	9	48	s
Folkestone	1.3	-	13	55	fg
Glasgow	7.4	0.09	10	50	sh
Guernsey	8.8	-	13	55	s
Hastings	1.4	-	14	57	c
Hayling I	7.2	-	15	59	s
Herne Bay	3.0	-	13	55	b
Hove	4.0	-	15	59	b
Hunstanton	4.2	-	11	52	b
Isle of Man	7.7	0.02	10	50	s
Isle of Wight	X	0.01	14	57	s
Jersey	7.5	-	13	55	b
Kinloss	4.5	0.05	9	48	sh
Leeds	9.2	0.01	12	54	s
Lerwick	6.4	0.04	8	46	h
Leuchars	9.2	0.04	11	52	sh
Littlehampton	7.1	0.01	15	59	s
London	4.3	-	13	55	s
Lowestoft	4.6	0.02	12	54	r
Manchester	7.0	0.01	10	50	s
Margate	1.7	-	12	54	c
Morecambe	8.5	0.03	9	48	s
Newcastle	10.6	0.01	11	52	s
Newquay	8.2	-	10	50	b
Norwich	5.4	0.01	12	54	r
Oxford	6.4	-	12	54	s
Penzance	6.3	-	12	54	s
Prestatyn	8.7	0.01	10	50	s
Ross on Wye	7.2	-	13	55	s
Saunton Sands	8.1	-	12	54	s
Scarborough	9.6	0.01	11	52	s
Shrewsbury	7.6	-	10	50	s
Skegness	6.3	-	12	54	s
Southport	X	-	10	50	s
Southsea	8.3	-	16	61	s
Stornoway	4.2	0.11	8	46	sh
Swanage	8.7	-	14	57	s
Teignmouth	7.2	-	13	55	s
Tenby	9.4	-	11	52	s
Tiree	6.1	0.11	9	48	sh
Torquay	10.2	-	X	X	s
Weymouth	8.7	-	14	57	s

YESTERDAY: highest day temp: Bournemouth, Dorset, and Southsea Hampshire, 16C (61F); lowest day max: Tulloch Bridge, Highland, 7C (45F); highest rainfall: Tulloch Bridge 0.34ins; highest sunshine: Newcastle upon Tyne 10.5hrs

ABROAD

	C	F	
Ajaccio	17	63	s
Akrotiri	17	63	s
Alex'dria	21	70	s
Algiers	16	61	c
Amsrdm	8	46	c
Athens	11	52	c
Bahrain	24	75	s
Bangkok	34	93	f
Barbados	26	79	r
Barcelona	X		
Beijing	2	36	c
Beirut	17	63	f
Belgrade	6	43	f
Berlin	6	43	s
Bermuda	17	63	c
Biarritz	13	55	s
Bordeaux	17	63	s
Brussels	10	50	s
Budapest	5	41	f
B Aires	21	70	f
Cairo	22	72	s
Cape Tn	25	77	s
Chicago	6	43	s
Ch'church	X		
Cologne	10	50	s
Cphagn	2	36	f
Corfu	11	52	r
Dublin	13	55	s
Dubrovnik	12	54	s
Faro	19	66	s
Florence	9	48	f
Frankfurt	7	45	s
Funchal	17	63	f
Geneva	9	48	s
Gibraltar	19	66	s
Helsinki	0	32	c
Hong K	17	63	f
Innsbruck	7	45	s
Istanbul	8	46	f
Jeddah	32	90	s
Jo'burg	20	68	s
L Palmas	20	68	s
Le Touqt	11	52	f
Lisbon	18	64	s
Locarno	10	50	f
L Angeles	11	52	f
Luxembg	9	48	s
Luxor	27	81	s
Madrid	17	63	s
Majorca	21	70	s
Malaga	20	68	s
Malta	15	59	c
Melbourne	X		
Mexico C	X		
Miami	18	64	s
Milan	9	48	c
Montreal	3	37	f
Moscow	1	34	s
Munich	5	41	f
Nairobi	25	77	c
Naples	9	48	f
N Delhi	30	86	s
N York	7	45	s
Nice	16	61	s
Oslo	1	34	c
Paris	13	55	s
Perth	X		
Prague	1	34	c
Reykjavik	3	37	d
Rhodes	17	63	f
Rio de J	25	77	f
Riyadh	24	75	s
Rome	15	59	s
Ron'sway	9	48	c
Salzburg	5	41	f
S Frisco	9	48	s
Santiago	12	54	s
S Paulo	X		
Seoul	16	61	s
Singapore	32	90	f
Stockholm	0	32	f
Strasbrg	9	48	s
Sydney	22	72	f
Tangier	18	64	s
Tel Aviv	18	64	s
Tenerife	20	68	f
Tokyo	17	63	f
Toronto	0	32	s
Tunis	17	63	f
Valencia	21	70	s
Vancver	3	37	f
Venice	9	48	f
Vienna	3	37	c
Warsaw	5	41	s
Washton	7	45	s
Zurich	6	43	s

Temperatures at midday local time on Wednesday. X = not available

HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	2:15	4.4	14:22	4.6
Avonmouth	8:18	14.2	20:37	14.1
Belfast	11:59	3.6	-	-
Cardiff	8:04	13.1	20:23	13.0
Devonport	6:45	5.8	19:07	5.7
Dover	-	-	12:00	6.9
Dublin	0:15	4.1	12:26	4.4
Falmouth	6:16	5.6	18:38	5.5
Greenock	1:31	3.3	13:50	3.6
Harwich	0:42	4.1	13:07	4.2
Holyhead	11:18	6.0	23:41	5.8
Hull (Albert D)	7:18	9.0	19:27	9.3
Ilfracombe	7:03	9.9	19:22	9.8
King's Lynn	7:18	7.3	19:27	7.8
Leith	3:31	5.8	15:45	5.9
Liverpool	-	-	12:18	10.1
London Bridge	2:42	7.6	15:09	7.7
Lowestoft	10:34	2.5	22:38	2.7
Margate	0:42	5.0	13:18	5.0
Milford Haven	7:15	7.5	19:35	7.4
Newquay	6:06	7.5	18:26	7.4
Oban	6:47	4.3	19:00	4.1
Penzance	5:35	5.9	17:55	5.7
Portland	8:26	2.3	20:49	2.2
Portsmouth	0:04	4.8	12:18	4.8
Shoreham	-	-	12:15	6.5
Southampton	11:52	4.7	-	-
Swansea	7:19	13.0	19:39	12.8
Tees	4:43	10.2	16:51	10.3
Walton-On-Naze	0:29	4.3	12:57	4.4

All times GMT. Heights in metres.

هكذا من الأصل

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THE TIMES 2

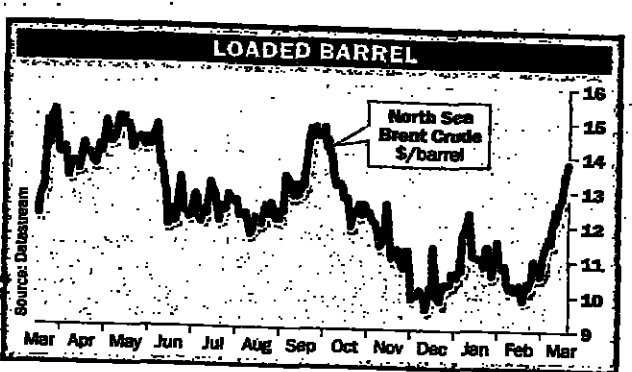


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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY MARCH 19 1999

Oil price takes off after Saudis cut output



By Martin Barrow

THE sharp recovery in oil prices gathered pace yesterday as Saudi Arabia, the world's largest producer, moved to implement a substantial cut in output.

Benchmark Brent crude from the North Sea traded close to $14 a barrel in London, its highest level in nearly six months. Oil prices have now risen by almost 40 per cent since touching a low of $9.90 in mid-February.

Yesterday's 60 cent rise to $13.87 was driven by expectations that last week's agreement by producers to cut output by two million barrels per day would be implemented.

Brent averaged just $13.34 per barrel last year, the lowest in more than 20 years, and members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) lost more than $50 billion (£31 billion) in revenues in the year.

Saudi Arabia, which has been producing 8 million barrels per day (bpd), yesterday served notice to customers in Japan and South Korea that April deliveries of crude would be cut by at least 11 per cent. Taiwan will also be affected.

Similar moves have been made by Algeria and Iran, which are also Opec members and helped to forge last week's agreement in the Hague. Yesterday Mexico, which is not a member of Opec but is part of the effort to rescue oil prices, ordered the state-owned oil company Pemex to cut daily output by 125,000 bpd.

There is concern that higher oil prices could delay the economic recovery of South-East Asia. During last year's financial crisis Malaysia, Indonesia and Japan, all major importers of crude, were spared further damage by the sharp fall in oil prices, which slashed their energy import bill.

The International Energy Agency (IEA), which monitors the oil market on behalf of energy consumers, has forecast a rise in demand for Opec's oil in 1999 because producers outside Opec, such as Russia, are suffering a decline in output.

The IEA expects global demand for oil to remain unchanged at 74.7 million bpd this year but forecasts a rise in oil produced by Opec to 27.1 million bpd from the 26.9 million bpd forecast only a month ago.

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Borneo decision, page 33

Business Today



Alchemy's formula pays
Jon Moulton's firm reaps rich rewards

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STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	6114.3	(-26.3)
Yield	2.59%	
FTSE All Share	2825.40	(-11.50)
Nikkei	15717.92	(-550.19)
New York:		
Dow Jones	9902.44	(+23.03)*
S&P Composite	1305.14	(+7.32)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	[illegible]*	([illegible])
Long bond	[illegible]*	([illegible])
Yield	5.48%*	(5.51%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth interbank	[illegible]	([illegible])
Liffe long gilt future (Jun)	117.70	(117.68)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6298*	(1.6300)
London:		
$	1.6301	(1.6296)
€	1.4837	(1.4803)
SFr	2.3734	(2.3652)
Yen	191.97	(192.97)
£ Index	102.5	(102.4)

DOLLAR

London:		
€	1.0989*	(1.1005)
SFr	1.4540*	(1.4500)
Yen	117.55*	(118.25)
$ index	107.4	(107.6)

Tokyo close Yen 118.56

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent15-day(Jun)	$13.50	($13.25)

GOLD

London close	$283.15	($294.15)

* denotes midday trading prices

Exchange rates .... Page 28

Longbridge doubts grow as Rover losses top £600m

By Adam Jones and Sigrid Aufterbeck

CHRIS RADBURN / NEWS TEAM INTERNATIONAL



A worker leaving the Longbridge plant yesterday as the uncertainty over the Birmingham factory intensified in the wake of Rover's massive losses

ROVER, the struggling British subsidiary of BMW, the German carmarker, made a loss of DM1.87 billion (£645 million) last year — more than seven times the DM260 million deficit in 1997.

The size of the losses, which shocked some analysts, come as BMW is thought to be haggling with the UK Government for more money before giving any commitment on the future of the Rover factory at Longbridge in Birmingham, which directly employs about 14,000 people.

Ahead of yesterday's meeting of the BMW board, the Department of Trade and Industry told executives that it was prepared to contribute towards the cost of developing a new car that would replace the ageing Rover 200 and 400 models in a bid to keep Longbridge open.

However, despite leaks that a £200 million offer is on the table, there were suggestions last night that the DTI offered just £100 million. BMW is thought to be looking for at least £180 million.

None of the parties in the negotiations would discuss the size of the offer yesterday. The DTI emphasised that the "indication" of an aid package would be open to further discussion after BMW considered it yesterday.

The Government's offer of aid is linked to productivity increases, training improvements and new investment, which is likely to cost BMW a total of £1.7 billion.

Stephen Byers, the Trade and Industry Secretary, said: "The package we have put to BMW is complex and we therefore expect to have further discussions in the next few weeks."

Although some sources had been suggesting yesterday that there could be an announcement on Longbridge's future at the end of next week, it now seems likely that the process will drag on longer.

BMW has previously given warning that the new Rover model could be built in Hungary instead of the UK.

It said yesterday: "Given the current stage of discussions with the British Government, the BMW board has not yet decided on the investment site for production of the successor to the Rover 200 and 400 series."

Prior estimates of the 1998 loss at Rover had differed wildly — from £200 million to £1 billion. Rover's woes have been caused by the strong pound and provisions against the cost of making more than 2,500 staff redundant. BMW has not given any breakdown of the losses.

The strength of sterling reduced earnings from Rover exports, which account for about 56 per cent of production. The pound conversely hit Rover's domestic market aiding foreign imports from companies such as Peugeot and Renault. The Rover losses caused BMW group net profits to slump from DM1.246 billion in 1997 to DM903 million last year.

Georg Stürzer, automobile analyst at HypoVereinsbank, said: "The sum of DM1.87 billion for Rover losses is indeed at the very high end of our expectations." But he added that he believed that BMW had loaded the 1998 results with as many Rover losses as it could find, rather than shifting them into next year's figures.

Commentary, page 29

No big spenders on high street in February

By Alasdair Murray, Economics Correspondent

RETAIL sales volumes fell in February as consumers continued to adopt a cautious approach to high street spending.

The weak figures, coupled with separate data showing that money supply growth has fallen to its lowest rate for nearly four years, left analysts confident that the Bank of England will cut rates again in the near future.

Willem Buiter, an independent member of the Monetary Policy Committee, added to the impression that rates will fall further when he indicated that he will continue to push for rate reductions.

Professor Buiter, who was the sole member of the MPC to have voted for a rate cut at the last meeting, said he favoured moving swiftly to a position where interest rates no longer have to move lower.

Professor Buiter's comments briefly sent the pound lower on the foreign exchanges, although it recovered to close marginally up against both the dollar and the euro. The markets also shrugged off the European Central Bank's decision to leave rates on hold at 3.0 per cent.

After a strong bounce-back in retail sales during the January discounting period, volumes slipped by 0.3 per cent last month. This left the less-volatile quarterly growth rate just 1 per cent higher than in the same three months last year, the weakest performance for three years. However, the annual growth rate ticked up from 1.1 per cent to 1.3 per cent.

Cisco chief attacks mergers

By Chris Ayres

THE president of Cisco Systems, the $170 billion manufacturer of telecoms equipment, has challenged the rationale for his industry's urgency to consolidate through mergers and acquisitions.

In an interview with *The Times*, John Chambers, who is also Cisco's chief executive, predicts that more than 70 per cent of acquisitions in the telecoms industry will fail. He is fiercely critical of the $20 billion (£12.3 billion) acquisition of Ascend by Lucent Technologies — one of Cisco's main competitors.

Telecom mergers and the acquisition of Internet companies have helped to drive US shares to record highs. But Mr Chambers says recent deals have been belated, overpriced and likely to fail. Acquisition prices "were probably 50 to 100 per cent higher than what we would have paid," he said.

Cisco kid, page 31

BICC shuns bid from Wassall

By Paul Armstrong

BICC Group, the troubled and much-restructured engineering company that made a £94 million loss last year, has rejected a possible £380 million takeover bid from Wassall, its second biggest shareholder.

Wassall, an industrial conglomerate, said last night that it had sought BICC's support for an offer pitched at 90p a share, 8p above yesterday's closing price.

But Alan Jones, BICC chief executive, described the price as "ridiculously low and opportunistic". Mr Jones added: "I really don't think it is anything like value for the company. People are saying we are turning the company around and that there is a lot to come."

Speculation about a takeover bid for BICC has been rife since Wassall snared a stake at 57p in the group in November and it now holds 9.3 per cent of the group. BICC's share price has edged up from a low of 38p last year, due in part to the company's sale of its troublesome businesses and a sharp reduction in its debt load. Its efforts to rebuild its market image were dealt a blow this month when it unveiled a £94 million pre-tax loss for 1998.

Chris Miller, chief executive of Wassall, said: "This proposal should be brought to the attention of BICC shareholders."

Hanover guarantees a millennium break

By Dominic Walsh

HANOVER International, the four-star hotel operator, is to close its hotels over the new year after concluding that staff and entertainment costs would outweigh the benefits of staying open to celebrate the millennium.

Peter Eyles, executive chairman, said that the levels of service would have been difficult to guarantee.

"I don't think much money will be made by hotels," he said. "The cost of hiring entertainment has gone through the roof and any staff willing to work will charge a king's ransom."

Mr Eyles said that making its computer systems year 2000 compliant had cost the company £250,000. "Even then," he added, "I don't think anybody can say with any certainty what will happen on January 1."

Hanover's decision to close its six hotels — in Skipton, Reading, Daventry, Hinckley, Huddersfield and Ashbourne — is in contrast with its peers.

In a recent survey of 60 London hoteliers, Pannell Kerr Forster, the leisure consultancy, found that just one was contemplating shutting up shop for New Year's Eve.

Shares of Hanover fell 8p to 117½p despite the company unveiling an impressive 62 per cent jump in 1998 profits before tax and exceptionals to £3.2 million, from turnover up 8 per cent to £21.4 million. Earnings per share reached 15.8p (10.5p) and a final dividend of 0.9p gives a total payout for the year of 1.5p (1.0p).

Mr Eyles said that Hanover was looking to add new hotels in the coming months. It is thought to be discussing a £15 million deal to acquire a long lease on the Ashford International in Kent, currently operated by Queens Moat Houses.

Gucci rebuffs LVMH claim

By Fraser Nelson

THE fragile truce between LVMH and Gucci was broken last night after the Italian fashion house issued early profit figures to prove it is in better financial health than its French rival.

Gucci, due to release its results next week, said its 1998 profits rose by 11 per cent. This compares favourably with a 29 per cent decline by the whole LVMH group, which returned its final results yesterday.

The move came on the eve of peace talks, which the two sides are due to start in Amsterdam today. They will discuss whether LVMH's recently built 34.4 per cent stake in Gucci allows it a seat on the board.

Gucci said it was forced to issue yesterday's statement because Bernard Arnault, LVMH's chairman, had told Paris analysts it was half as profitable as his Louis Vuitton fashion division.

He told them: "What needs to be done with Gucci now is what we have done with Vuitton for the past 10 years."

Domenico De Sole, Gucci's chief executive, said the company made a net profit of $195 million (£120 million) on sales up 7 per cent at $1.04 billion last year.

Commentary, page 29

Westland plans to merge with Italian rival

By Adam Jones

THE controversy over Westland Helicopters, which almost brought down Margaret Thatcher's Government 13 years ago, came full circle yesterday when the company announced an agreement to merge with Agusta of Italy.

In 1986 the fate of the ailing Westland sparked furious exchanges in the Cabinet. It had negotiated a rescue by Sikorsky of America but Michael Heseltine, then Defence Secretary, wanted Westland to merge with a European consortium including British Aerospace, Aerospatiale of France and Agusta. When this plan was rejected, Mr Heseltine resigned from the Cabinet in protest.

Mr Heseltine's desire for a European merger is now being partially satisfied, a reflection of how the political climate has swung in his favour.

GKN, Westland's latest parent, has signed a "heads of agreement" — a preliminary deal — with Finmeccanica, Agusta's owner. It will combine Westland and Agusta in a 50:50 joint venture company that will have a turnover of about £1.5 billion in 2000.

Tony Blair has come out in favour of European mergers and George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, welcomed the move, which requires regulatory approval.

However, the chances of this European consolidation going one step further are being hampered by the involvement of the French State.

Through its stake in Aerospatiale, the French Government owns part of Eurocopter, the other big European helicopter group. The other shareholder is Dasa of Germany, Aerospatiale's partner in the Airbus consortium.

David Wright, the GKN director who will be chairman of the Westland-Agusta joint venture, agreed yesterday that the state involvement in Eurocopter made a pan-European merger less likely.

The other big helicopter makers are Boeing, Bell and Sikorsky. Mr Wright said that he thought only Boeing would have larger sales in 2000.

GKN Westland's order book stands at $6.3 billion (£3.9 billion), Agusta's at $2.2 billion. The pair jointly developed the EH101 military helicopter ordered by the UK, Italy and Canada.

Amadeo Caporaletti, chief executive of Agusta, will be chief executive of the joint venture. The board will be equally composed of GKN and Finmeccanica representatives.

Bank deal could lead to rerating

By Marianne Curphey

CLAUDE BEBEAR, chairman of AXA, a key shareholder in the putative three-way merger between Banque Nationale de Paris (BNP), Paribas and Société Général, said that the creation of the new entity would lead to a rerating of French retail banking.

AXA, the second-largest insurance company in the world, holds 6 per cent of BNP and 8 per cent of Paribas. M Bébéar revealed that Michel Pébereau, director-general of BNP, had consulted him before convincing the rest of BNP's board that he should launch the hostile bid for SG and Paribas.

M Bébéar said that he believed the deal would create value for shareholders, was good for the three companies involved and would not mean too many job losses. The new bank would be the largest in euroland.

He said: "BNP is on a p/e multiple of 12, while the others are ten to 11. The average European bank is on a rating of 14 to 16."

AXA unveiled a 16.5 per cent rise in income before taxes and minority interests to Fr24.5 billion (£2.6 billion).



Ian Menzies-Gow, chairman, (left), and Mark Pullen, finance director of Geest

Fresh food boosts Geest

GEEST, the chilled foods group, lifted profits 15 per cent in 1998 as it continued to benefit from a wide-ranging restructuring that centred on the disposal of its banana business three years ago (Martin Barrow writes).

Reporting pre-tax profits of £28.1 million for last year, the company said its prepared salads, soups, sauces and pasta market was set for double-digit sales growth in 1999.

Geest shares rose 16p to 425p yesterday. The total dividend is increased 20 per cent to 12p a share with a 7.2p final, payable from earnings that rose 19 per cent to 30.3p.

Ian Menzies-Gow, chairman, said: "Demographic and lifestyle changes are supporting growth in fresh prepared foods, some of the fastest-growing areas of the food sector. We will continue to expand our business to meet this demand."

"Turnover from continuing businesses was up 14 per cent at £474.4 million.

Irish Life profits increase

By Gavin Lumsden

IRISH LIFE, the insurer that is set to merge with Irish Permanent next month to create the Republic's third largest financial services provider, saw a 20 per cent rise in operating profits in 1998, its last full year as an independent.

Operating profits rose to Ir£136.9 million (£118 million) after tax from Ir£113.8 million. There was a 26 per cent increase in sales of life, pensions and investment business which reached Ir£140 million.

After a difficult 1997, in which the company's 400-strong sales force went on strike in protest at a shake-up of the business, Irish Life saw total sales in Ireland rebound 28 per cent to Ir£94.1 million.

Demand from private investors was strong with retail sales up 39 per cent to Ir£42.6 million. Because of the merger with Irish Permanent a second interim dividend of Ir10.2p is being paid in lieu of a final dividend. This lifts the total 10 per cent to Ir14.5p a share.

BUSINESS ROUND-UP

BT to make Italian mobile licence bid

BRITISH TELECOM yesterday said it is to bid for Italy's fourth mobile telephone licence, and signalled that it is "highly unlikely" that it would get involved in Olivetti's €53 billion (£36 billion) takeover battle for Telecom Italia.

BT said it is to bid for the licence as part of a consortium called Blue, which includes Autostrade, Mediaset, Benetton and Distacom. Gaining the licence would give BT access to Europe's largest mobile phone market, with more than 21 million customers and market penetration of 40 per cent.

"Italy is Europe's most dynamic mobile market with immense potential for further growth, which a fourth licence would bring," said Pat Gallagher, BT's director of Europe. The licence will be awarded in June.

BT's indication that it is steering clear of the Telecom Italia situation came as Robert Colaninno, Olivetti's chief executive, was in London presenting to analysts on its takeover bid.

Web bookshop float

THE unprofitable barnesandnoble.com, an Internet bookshop run by Barnes and Noble, America's biggest bookstore chain, and Germany's Bertelsmann, will publicly float a 15 to 20 per cent stake. The initial public offering, announced yesterday, will raise as much as $200 million (£123 million) to fund the massive marketing costs of the Web battle against the rival bookseller Amazon.com. Losses at barnesandnoble.com have grown as marketing costs have exceeded revenue.

Piasecki plans buyout

JUREK PIASECKI, chairman and chief executive of Goldsmiths, yesterday revealed details of his plan to buy the jeweller out at 183p a share, and swore that he would "never again" take it back to the Stock Exchange. Goldsmiths was floated at 150p a share in 1990 after a management buyout that Mr Piasecki led. Mr Piasecki and his venture capital backers, Alchemy Partners, are offering a total of £43.9 million to buy the company off its present shareholders. **Golden touch, page 31**

Savings rates on the up

NATIONAL SAVINGS is increasing the rates on its fixed-rate products by up to 0.4 per cent after the increases in the medium-term money market rates. However, variable rate accounts remain unchanged and could go down if the bank base rate falls below 5.5 per cent. New savers with more than £20,000 in First Option Bonds will be paid 4.9 per cent instead of 4.75 per cent. Rates on Children's, Pensioners' and Capital bonds are 4.65 per cent for five years, up from 4.25 per cent.

Kwik-Fit shares leap

KWIK-FIT shares leapt 8½ per cent yesterday after the car repair company said the slack conditions that led to a profits warning in January had evaporated. It returned pre-tax profits of £64.3 million (£55.1 million) for the year to February 28 — back to in line with expectations. The company said that business since the warning had risen sharply. Earnings were 26p (22.3p) per share. The total dividend rises to 7.5p (6.5p) after a final 4.85p. The shares closed up 34½p to 439½p.

King World in talks

KING World Productions, the distributor of the *Oprah Winfrey Show* and other syndicated US TV shows, is in talks with potential buyers. Advised by Frank Biondi Jr, former head of Universal Studios, the management of King World — which has a $1 billion (£600 million) cash hoard earmarked for acquisitions — is said to be looking for a deal, with CBS, Sony, Fox Entertainment and NBC reportedly in the frame.

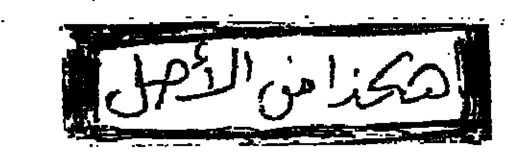
Midshires go-ahead

THE TAKEOVER of Birmingham Midshires by the Halifax overcame its final major hurdle yesterday when the Building Societies Commission gave the go-ahead. The transfer of Birmingham Midshires from building society to independent division of the Halifax is on target for completion on April 19. The basic windfall distribution to members is £1,250, but the cash payout ranges from £800 to £5,400.

EXCHANGE RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.68	2.50
Austria Sch	21.33	19.67
Belgium Fr	62.80	57.84
Canada $	2.593	2.405
Cyprus Cyp £	0.9000	0.8285
Denmark Kr	11.57	10.68
Egypt	5.76	5.15
Finland Mkk	9.34	8.59
France Fr	10.16	9.38
Germany Dm	3.053	2.811
Greece Dr	501	462
Hong Kong $	13.45	12.25
Iceland	129	109
Indonesia	18293	13293
Ireland Pt	1.2183	1.1293
Israel Shk	6.90	6.24
Italy Lira	3036	2799
Japan Yen	207.18	189.65
Malta	0.673	0.614
Netherlds Gld	3.447	3.152
New Zealand $	3.21	2.97
Norway Kr	13.11	12.07
Portugal Esc	308.80	286.77
S Africa Rd	10.79	9.83
Spain Pta	257.36	238.57
Sweden Kr	14.01	12.91
Switzerland Fr	2.512	2.294
Turkey Lira	608456	568042
USA $	1.736	1.593

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.



Handbags at dawn



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

The scene-setting for today's meeting between emissaries of Gucci and LVMH does not point towards an early and amicable solution to their dispute. Handbags at dawn seemed a more likely outcome of the figure-slinging of yesterday.

For a man contending that he should be welcomed aboard by Gucci because of the expertise and enhanced profits he can bring, it was perhaps unfortunate that Bernard Arnault had to reveal a drop of almost 30 per cent in net operating income. But the ever-inventive M Arnault is not the sort to let that stand is his way. He chose instead to concentrate on the performance of just a small, but perfectly formed, part of his business. Louis Vuitton Malletier, he boasted, enjoyed operating margins of 46 per cent last year, a point worth noting if you should be thinking of buying a new suitcase or wallet.

Since in the LVMH accounts Vuitton usually nestles in the category known as "fashion and leather goods", alongside such darlings of the fashionistas as Dior and Givenchy, the news of this impressive performance bursts upon the catwalk, its provenance hard to ascertain.

Gucci, which reports next week, can only pour scorn on the Arnault show and concentrate on the fact that its profits are up by 11 per cent, even if its margins are only 18 per cent. Perhaps chairman Domenico De Sole should be allowed to indulge in the Arnault technique and choose to do battle on the margins he makes on stilletto heels.

De Sole is understandable unnerved by M Arnault's interest in his business. The prospect of the LVMH chairman, now proud owner of a 34.4 per cent in Gucci, offering help and advice on how he should be running things might not enthuse many a corporate leader who thinks that he is doing a fine job on his own.

But Arnualt will not go away. He turned down the opportunity to buy Gucci in 1994, before designer Tom Ford had arrived with his must-have velvet shirts and transformed the business. Like Edith Piaf, Arnault insists he has no regrets, that his skill is in making successful brands even better, not risking shareholders' cash on unproven ones, but the line is not entirely convincing. His latest investment, a young cosmetics company which claims to operate "the hottest spa in New York", indicates a more flexible approach to portfolio building!

Yet there is no doubt that, eventually, he would like to add Gucci to his stable. He may be prepared to agree not to increase his share stake for several years but he does not intend to abandon Gucci this time. So De Sole must find a way to live with his new shareholder.

This is where the issue becomes far more important than frocks. The battle between the two has shown up the flaws in Dutch company law to the horror of investors in both companies. Their eventual compromise will have to be followed by changes in the law.

Westland picks its own bride at last

Westland's merger with Agusta, its long-term soulmate, will have taken an age — if it comes off. A week is a long time in politics; 13 years is an age even in business. The detail of what happened when the 1985 British Government tried to grapple with the fate of privately owned Westland has become a little fuzzy even if the outline remains melodramatically coloured. In essence, a company that was even then of only modest size and strategic importance became the battleground between the Atlanticists and pro-Europeans of British politics.

There was, you remember, the day when Michael Heseltine stormed out of Margaret Thatcher's Cabinet meeting because he claimed he was not getting a fair hearing for his European merger solution to the problem of Britain's Westland helicopter group. In retrospect, it was the moment that his claim to succeed Mrs Thatcher lapsed and perhaps also when the seeds were sown for the Tory disaster of 1997.

On the other long-term thinking, however, Mr Heseltine's view stands up better. Even then, the Defence Secretary had a vision of Europe-wide defence corporations that is now common currency, though still being stymied by French statism.

The financially easier solution to Westland's industrial problems, at that time, was a deal with America's Sikorsky, another long-time ally.

This plan originally had an Italian element too, but it was Fiat rather than Agusta. The Atlantic solution won the support of the board, Mrs Thatcher and Lord Hanson, one of several colourful figures who played roles in the exaggerated drama.

Lord Hanson, in the end, delivered the US deal in the market. But Sir Leon Brittan, then Trade Secretary, was the prime minister's loyal political agent. He was also the other main casualty, having to quit his job to take the blame for dirty tricks in Whitehall's corridors of power.

How odd then that Europe's champion should end up reforming the poll tax while Sir Leon, the cap-doffingly loyal Atlanticist, was made a British Commissioner in Brussels as second best to his stalled domestic career.

Sir Leon has been at the centre of European Commission affairs for years as a deputy president but has somehow emerged from the second great scandal of his career as a reforming Mr Clean.

Clearly Sir Leon gained something from the Westland experience. And at last Westland may have found its European future.

EU traders beware American deficit

This year's least surprising record so far is America's latest monthly trade deficit. Surpassing even the $16.7 billion notched up last August, it reached $17 billion in January. If gloomier forecasts of $300 billion for the year prove right, there will be more records before buoyant importers start popping the millennium champagne.

Surging imports should not be the problem. China and others are feeding the US consumption boom and keeping prices down. American unemployment is at a 30-year low even if 337,000 factory jobs have gone in 12 months.

Falling exports are more worrying. Markets from Bangkok to Kyoto and from St Petersburg to São Paolo are shrinking. At this stage, US officials are taking the responsible line. The only way for America to stop being importer of last resort is for other parts of the world to manage more growth. The US needs a buoyant Korea, not a broken one.

Inevitably, that is accompanied by mantras about opening up markets to US exports. This will become ever more a rhetorical refrain as the year unfolds and presidential primaries draw nearer. Japan will remain US public enemy number one but the EU is a solid number two.

The banana skirmish is still not resolved. It is only a prelude to the similarly compromised EU position on imports of US beef whose growth owes too much to injected hormones. The cold figures will trigger hot words and maybe conflagration.

Dangerous driving

IF, AS seems likely, BMW has chosen to present the worst possible face of Rover in its annual results, the strategy is a risky one. Depicting Rover as a basket case may not be the best way of squeezing the maximum subsidy from the Government. Aid of £100 million or £200 million cannot guarantee the future of Longbridge but it could be an expensive way of keeping thousands in work until after the next election. The Richardson brothers of Merry Hill want to buy the site. Let them create new jobs there.

Relax the planning laws, says supermarket chief

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

THE chairman of Wm Morrison Supermarkets has called on the Government to loosen planning laws so that the Yorkshire-based retailer can compete effectively with its larger rivals such as Tesco and Asda.

Morrisons has begun expanding into the South of England but has been able to open only a handful of supermarkets because of the difficulty of winning planning consent for food stores.

Ken Morrison said yesterday that the company would like to open about ten stores every year, but is able to find only about five or six sites because of the planning restrictions.

The Office of Fair Trading is due to publish in the next fortnight its findings into whether the big four supermarkets — Tesco, J Sainsbury, Asda and Safeway — are making excessively large profits. Mr Morrison said that allowing his company to open more stores would aid healthy competition in the sector.

"There has to be a time shortly where the situation has to change for the benefit of the general shopping public and the cost of living," Mr Morrison said.

The comments came as Wm Morrison reported better than expected profits for the year to January 31. On turnover of £2.53 billion (£2.29 billion) the company made pre-tax profit of £174.9 million (£147.4 million). On diluted earnings per share of 13.7 million (12.1p) the company is paying a final dividend of 2p, giving a total for the year of 2.45p (2.1p).

Current trading figures show that Morrison's is ahead of the supermarket pack with 7.3 per cent like-for-like sales growth. While much of this is accounted for by sales of petrol, grocery sales are believed to be up more than 4 per cent like-for-like, which is about double the current sector average.

The company opened five new stores last year and bought five from competitors, taking its total number of stores to 95.

New superstores are under construction at Letchworth, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Nelson and Norwich. A large number of stores will be refurbished this year. Next year, stores are planned at Crewe, Thornbury (Bradford), Kettering, Wellingborough, Newcastle upon Tyne and Redcar.

The company's shares, which have come under pressure in recent weeks, closed 18p higher at 298½p.

Tempus, page 30

Acquisition planned by Cobham

COBHAM, the aerospace engineering group, is ready to spend "several hundred million" pounds on an acquisition (Paul Armstrong writes).

Gordon Page, chief executive, said that it reflected the impending rationalisation of the aerospace industry.

Cobham announced yesterday that its pre-tax profit jumped 21.6 per cent last year to £63.6 million.

Ben Fidler, an analyst with Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, described the result as an outstanding set of figures.

A final dividend of 10.6p was declared, taking the year's payout to 15.25p, up 15.1 per cent.

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United to unveil $111m purchase

BY RAYMOND SNODDY, MEDIA EDITOR

UNITED News and Media will today announce its largest acquisition for nearly two years — the $111 million (£68.5 million) purchase of Continuing Medical Education (CME) in the US.

CME is the largest for-profit provider of continuing education for American physicians through 160 conferences and seminars a year. It also produces more than 300 multimedia study kits for doctors and has trade magazines such as *Psychiatric Times* and *Medicine & Behaviour*.

Lord Hollick, chief executive of United, the ITV and Express newspapers company which is turning itself into a business services group, sees the deal as strategically significant and takes United into a sector worth $3 billion a year. It will also reduce United's dependence on advertising — only 11 per cent of CME revenues come from advertisements.

Last year the US company had revenues of $28 million and earnings before interest tax and depreciation of $7 million. The price of about four times revenues appears high but United believes CME revenues will grow at 20 per cent a year and that the acquisition will be earnings enhancing in its first year.

CME grants doctors professional credits for completing CME courses or attending its meetings — the sort of credits doctors need to meet the requirements of US states in which they practice, as well as those of the American Medical Association.

Pledge on stadium by Laing

WALES'S new rugby stadium will be ready for the inaugural match against South Africa in June but at "substantially" less than full capacity, the project's contractor said (Adam Jones writes).

John Laing, the construction firm, had to make a provision of £26.1 million to cover cost over-runs on the Millennium Stadium. It pledged the venue would be fully ready for the World Cup in October.

Group pre-tax profits were £20.1 million (£32.2 million). Laing ordinary shares rose from 299½p to 311½p. Diluted earnings per share were 13.8p (24.7p). A dividend of 7p will be paid, making a total of 10.75p (10.5p).

STOCK MARKET MICHAEL CLARK

Oil sector gushes in spite of FTSE retreat

TRADING in two of our biggest blue chip companies accounted for more than 8 per cent of total turnover in the equity market yesterday.

Shell rose 15p to 412p as 64.36 million shares changed hands, while **BP Amoco** finished 27p higher at £10.28 on turnover of 32.6 million. The combined turnover of shares in the two companies was 96.9 million, helping to lift total volume to 1.16 billion.

The top 100 companies now account for about 82 per cent of the total stock market value and the dealers say the gulf between blue chips and secondliners is getting bigger.

Oil shares generally were in demand ahead of the Opec conference next week which is expected to sanction a cut in oil output of two million barrels per day. Other oil companies to go better included **Enterprise Oil**, up 27¼ at 340p. It is still in merger talks with rival **Lasmo**, 3¼p dearer at 138¼p.

The rest of the equity market was soon nursing sizeable losses after a promising start, but prices closed above their worst levels helped by an opening rally on Wall Street.

The FTSE 100 index finished 26.3 points down at 6,114.3, having been almost 66 points lower at one stage.

Investors remained cautious, taking full advantage of the Cheltenham Festival ahead of the "double witching" hour in London later today. This includes the expiry of the index option and futures and coincides with "triple witching" in New York.

But there were signs that traders were attempting to unwind their positions early to avoid the volatility that usually greets expiry time. This may have accounted for some of the wilder price movements, including **Barclays Bank**, down 40p at £17.83, after touching £17.38, and **Zeneca**, up 79p at £25.99.

EMI Group was one of the best performers among the top 100, rising 20½p to 418½p after a presentation by the new management.

PowerGen, which met brokers late on Wednesday, hardened 18½p to 692p. Goldman Sachs, the US securities house, has raised its recommendation for the shares from "market performer" to "market outperformer".

Smiths Industries came under the hammer, ending 33½p lower at 919½p with 1.6 million shares traded. Salomon Smith Barney, the US securities house, is convinced that the shares are overvalued by more than 100p.


Sir Martin Laing saw John Laing shares increase despite reporting lower profits and a hit on the Millennium Dome

Hopes of a counterbid sent **First Choice Holidays** climbing 17½p to 178½p. The speculators are pinning their hopes on **Airtours**, down 6p at 490p, making an offer of 220p a share to block the agreed £1.45 billion merger with Kuoni Reisen Holdings, the Swiss package holiday group. First Choice insists that it has not received an approach from Airtours.

Waterfall Holdings firmed 2p to 61½p after confirming reports in *The Times* that it wants to talk to rival **European Leisure**, unchanged at 92½p, about a merger of the two companies, with Waterfall's management taking the lead in the combined entity. This would scupper European's recently announced merger with Allied Leisure.

Norcros, that takeover favourite, rose 2½p to 81½p after a line of 3.65 million shares was snapped up at the 79p level.

HR Owen, the vehicle distributor, climbed 22½p to 165p in response to profits news and the purchase of 968,627 shares by Nicholas Lancaster, managing director. He now speaks for 4.5 million shares, or 26.5 per cent.

The view looks good these days for **John Laing** even though the construction group and housebuilder run by Sir Martin Laing, chairman, has taken a hit on the Millennium Dome. Profits were down 60 per cent, but the price rose 11½p to 311½p with the "A" shares 12p better at 311½p. The group is confident about the future.

London & Edinburgh Publishing firmed ¼p to 9¼p after returning to the black last year despite heavy write-offs. The publisher and marketing specialist is confident about prospects and is looking for acquisitions.

Share purchases by the chairman lifted **Ocean Group** 12½p to 892½p. Nigel Rich has bought 3,895 shares at 878¼p and now owns 21,895.

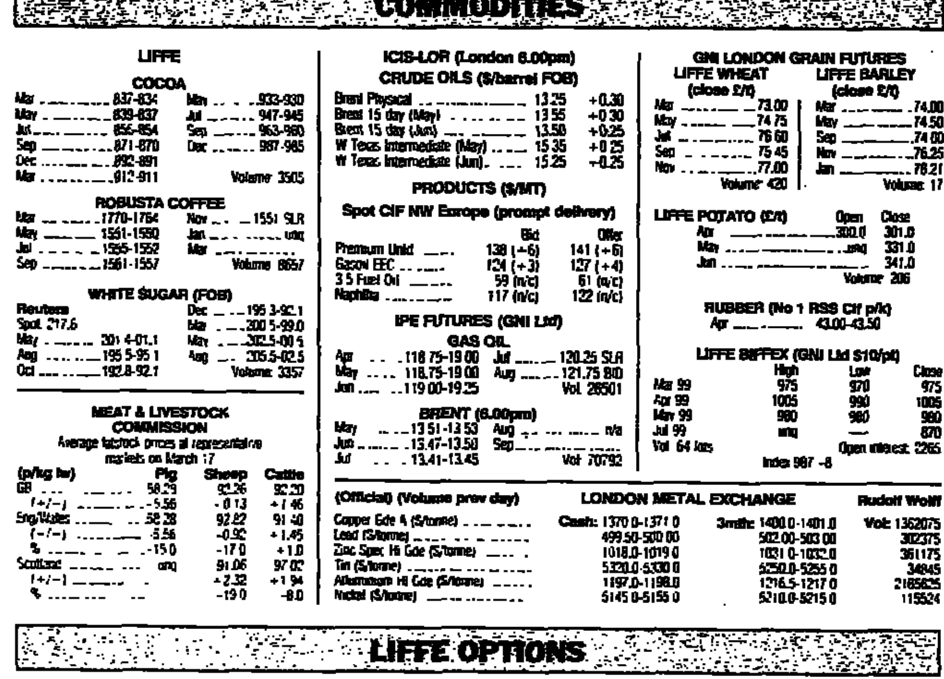
Rage Software finished 1¼p firmer at 16¼p as some large blocks of shares changed hands. Michael Mason, a director, has bought 150,000 shares at 15¼p and now owns 599,125. Another director, Andrew Brode, has also picked up 75,000 at 14½p, taking his holding to 200,000, but Paul Finnegan has sold 154,000 at 14½p. He still holds 6.12 million, or 2.43 per cent.

□ **GILT-EDGED:** It was a day of consolidation in the bond market after recent strong gains. The short end sported small gains, reflecting lingering hopes of a cut in bank base rates next month.

In the futures pit, the June series of the long gilt finished 2p dearer at £117.70 as 27,000 contracts were completed.

In shorts, Treasury 7 per cent 2002 finished 11p higher at £106.91, but at the longer end Treasury 8 per cent 2021 lost 7p at £148.09.

□ **NEW YORK:** Shares were higher in early trade, led by gains among financial and semiconductor issues. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was up 23.03 at 9,902.44.



LIFE seems to be getting tougher in the high street. The latest retail sales numbers made gloomy reading, showing a further decline in sales of clothing.

Retail sales generally in February, a dull month at the best of times in the high street, fell 0.3 per cent. The three-month growth rate, so far, is the lowest since January 1996.

The leading fashion retailers were marked sharply lower. Marks & Spencer led the way with a fall of 13½p to 379p, followed by Arcadia 14p to 187½p. Next 13p to 719p, and Storehouse 2p to 125p.

The retail analyst team at BT Alex Brown, the broker, is cautious about the outlook for fashion retailers. But the analysts are ruling out the prospect of profit downgrades for the time being, at least.

"We know that conditions are still not very good, but this confirms it. We will probably wait until the figures come out. We are still in the middle of the results season," said the team.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 9902.44 (+23.03)
S&P Composite 1305.14 (+7.32)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 15717.92 (−550.19)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 10659.32 (−280.75)

Amsterdam:
AEX Index 537.59 (−2.38)

Sydney:
AO 2967.7 (−10.1)

Frankfurt:
DAX 5013.62 (−63.61)

Singapore:
Straits 1466.07 (−4.09)

Brussels:
BEL20 3315.17 (−27.35)

Paris:
CAC-40 4152.37 (−17.64)

Zurich:
SMI Index 7195.7 (−36.1)

London:

FT 30	3716.4 (−8.1)
FTSE 100	6114.3 (−26.3)
FTSE 250	5463.3 (−22.0)
FTSE 350	2917.5 (−12.4)
FTSE Eurotop 100	2877.72 (−11.15)
FTSE All-Share	2825.40 (−11.50)
FTSE Non Financials	2852.22 (−7.45)
FTSE Fixed Interest	154.91 (+0.02)
FTSE Govt Secs	116.32 (+0.13)
Bargains	96766
SEAQ Volume	1172.9m
US$	1.6302 (+0.0005)
Euro	0.6740 (−0.0015)
£:SDR	n/a
Exchange Index	102.5 (+0.1)

Bank on England official close (4pm)
RPI 163.4 Jan (2.4%) Jan 1987 = 100
RPIX 161.8 Jan (2.6%) Jan 1987 = 100

RECENT ISSUES

Axon Group	261½	− 10
Enhanced Zero Trust	99¾	...
Gander Properties	7½	...
Gartmore High Cnv Pr	106½	...
Gartmore High Income	103½	...
Govett Enhanced Dv Pf	101½	...
Govett Enhanced Inc	95½	...
Jupiter En Zero Dv Pf	106½	+ ¼
Jupiter Enhanced Inc	100	...
Luminar Warrants	250	...
NBA Quantum	110	...
Sports Internet	131½	+ 10
Synstar	133	− ½

RIGHTS ISSUES

First Tech Cnv Prf n/p (320)	21½	+ 5½
Oxford Biomedica n/p (15)	8½	...
Waste Recycling n/p (406)	82½	− 14

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Acatos & Hutch	180	+ 25	+ 16.1
HR Owen	165	+ 22½	+ 15.7
Haynes Pub	190	+ 20	+ 11.7
First Choice	178½	+ 17½	+ 10.8
Enterprise	340	+ 27¼	+ 8.7
Kwik-Fit	439½	+ 34½	+ 8.5
Peterhouse	141½	+ 11	+ 8.4
Goldsmiths Gp	181½	+ 14	+ 8.3
Pegasus	241½	+ 15½	+ 6.8
Morrison (W)	298½	+ 18	+ 6.4
Nsb Retail Sys	320	+ 19	+ 6.3
Ranger	218¼	+ 12½	+ 6.0
Easynet	398	+ 20½	+ 5.4
Eidos	1762½	+ 90	+ 5.3
EMI	418½	+ 20¼	+ 5.0
Scot Sthn Engy	543	+ 25	+ 4.8
Cobham	905	+ 40	+ 4.6
Access Plus	250	+ 10	+ 4.1
Schlumberger	3703⅝	+146⅞	+ 4.1
Autologic	317½	+ 12½	+ 4.0
Laing (J)	311½	+ 12	+ 4.0
Geest	425	+ 16	+ 3.9
DCS Gp	716½	+ 24	+ 3.4

FALLS:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Estates Agency	425	− 62½	− 12.8
Driefontein	231¾	− 32	− 12.1
Norbain	212½	− 27½	− 11.4
Mansfield	210	− 23	− 9.8
Euro Telecom	138½	− 13½	− 8.8
Andrews Sykes	142½	− 12½	− 8.0
Arcadia Group	187½	− 14	− 6.9
Diageo	673½	− 34½	− 4.8

TEMPUS

Vote of disquiet

SHAREHOLDERS in Chesterfield Properties meet on Monday to vote on a proposal to dispose of about a quarter of the company's assets.

Attention focuses on two things. First, the properties to be sold are slated to change hands at a price below net asset value. Moreover, the market may have moved up since the deal was struck. If the shift has taken place, it widens the sale price discount. Secondly, the properties involved, once disposed of by Chesterfield, are to be managed by companies controlled by Robert Maxted. Mr Maxted is currently Chesterfield's chief executive, but will resign to take up the new role if — and only if — the disposal proposal is approved.

The taste left is sour. But Chesterfield is an unhappy case with its shares, caught in the small company trap, having consistently underperformed. The stock has traded at a significant discount to net assets for some time. In the circumstances management is absolutely right to seek release of shareholder value. Moreover, while the deal struck leaves something to be desired, if anyone were willing to make a better offer they would surely have shown their hand by now.

With Roger Wingate, the chairman, speaking for about 30 per cent of the shares it is unlikely that the deal will be voted down. But the humpy shareholding could work to independent shareholders' advantage. They can vote against the deal to register their disquiet at the way in which the disposal has been arranged. This will draw the appropriate corporate governance line in the sand, and may even prompt a renegotiation of the sale price. But it is unlikely to wreck the plan altogether.

So vote against.

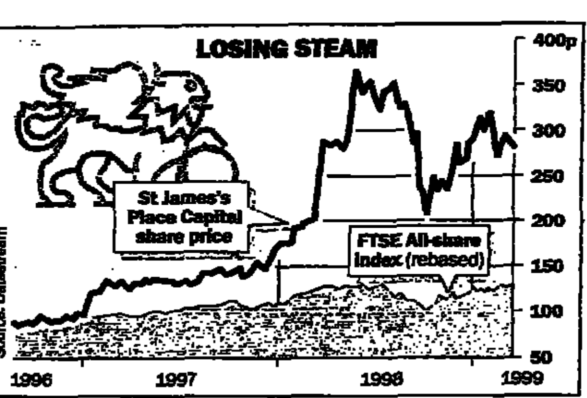
St James's Place

ONCE again Sir Mark Weinberg has demonstrated that he is a step ahead of most of his peers. His decision to change the charging structure on the pension policies sold by J Rothschild Assurance, the main trading division of St James's Place Capital, is a pragmatic move flowing from the political and commercial realities.

The Government wants pensions to be as flexible and transparent as possible so that people are encouraged to save for retirement. As a result it is determined that companies abandon the practice of front-loading pension savings policies with fees. Companies that ignore new Labour's enthusiasm for level charging — levying fees evenly across the savings term — are missing a critical trick.

Nevertheless, there are drawbacks. JRA's move away from front-end loading introduces uncertainty for SJPC's earnings. Will JRA's much admired salesforce be able to sell enough single premium policies to compensate for the decline in profitability of regular premium sales? Will they succeed in selling other, more lucrative lines of business such as health insurance? The dividend policy does not commend the shares, either.

SJPC has a good history of returning surplus capital to shareholders and more could come if the company sells its stake in the "vulture fund" Life Assurance Holding Corporation. In the meantime, Prudential holds a 28 per cent stake, which excites takeover speculation. Hold.



Wm Morrison

AS SUPERMARKET groups go, Morrisons is one of the smallest. It would like to be a lot bigger, and believes that it is held back from significant expansion by the Government's tough planning regulations. But despite the hostile planning environment and the competition of the likes of Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's and Safeway, Morrisons has not just survived, it has thrived. Low prices and an innovative service offering has done the trick. Many of the ideas adopted in recent years by the big four supermarket chains were pioneered at Morrisons.

It has expanded reasonably fast in the past year by opening new stores and buying some from the Co-op movement. Given the attention that the Government is now paying to the power of the big four supermarkets, Morrisons may hope that it will somehow be allowed to open more new stores. It is hard to see how this could happen, but anything that keeps the big four in check could well work to the advantage of Morrisons. Anyway, with like-for-like sales rising at about double the sector average, Morrisons is doing impressivly well without new store openeings.

The shares trade on a rating equivalent to the market average and at a premium to the food retailing sector's. But they should continue to rise in value. Buy.

Cobham

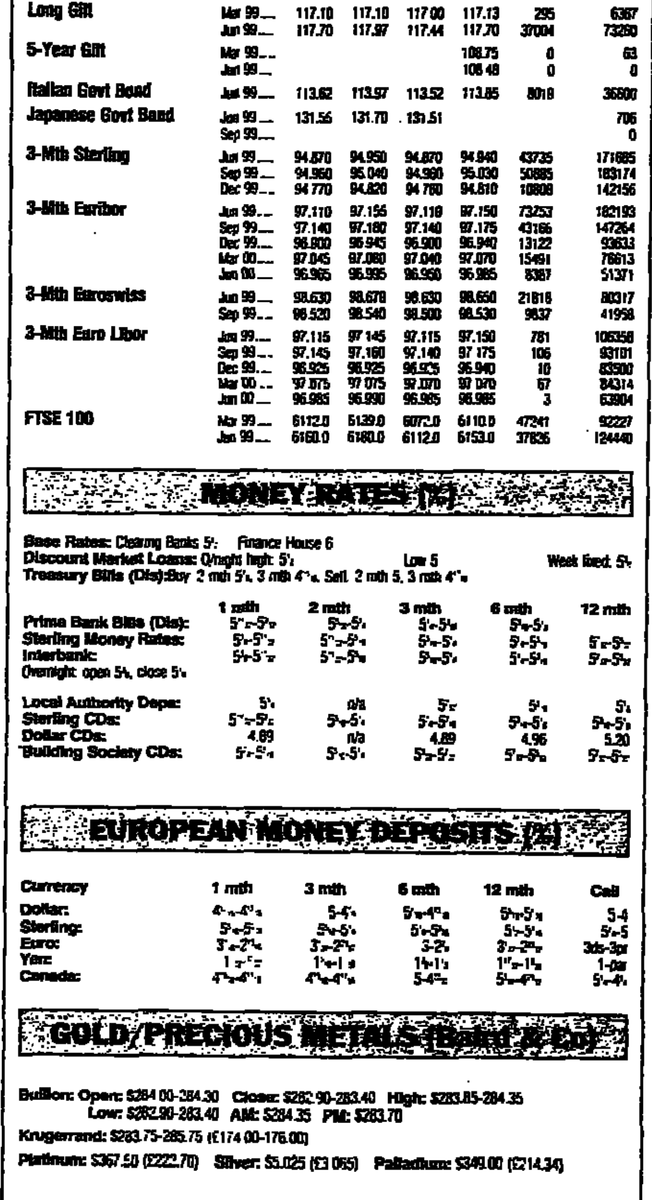
WHEN it comes to investor satisfaction, Cobham, the aerospace engineer, gets ticks in most of the right boxes. It won more approval yesterday with a 21.6 per cent rise in profits. The advance was far enough ahead of expectations to impress the market without embarrassing analysts.

Cobham emphasised its strengths by revealing a 10 per cent increase in its order book. It has £735 million of work lined up and said that a further £100 million of business was all but bagged.

It also said it has "several hundred million" pounds to spend on acquisitions while it can maintain capital expenditure and research and development spending. For a gadgetry company, this is vital.

The strong result and bright outlook fuelled a 5 per cent jump in Cobham's share price yesterday. This puts it on a future earnings multiple of 18 times, which represents a full price, but Cobham is set to enjoy solid, long-term, earnings growth from the next round of orders under its contract with Airbus. There are fears that aerospace markets are weakening, but Airbus is seen as being in better shape than Boeing. Cobham also hopes to secure contracts for the Eurofighter by the end of the year. Accumulate.

EDITED BY ROBERT COLE



COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

Mar	837-834	Mar	933-930
May	839-837	Jul	947-945
Jul	856-854	Sep	963-960
Sep	871-870	Dec	987-985
Dec	892-891		
Mar	912-911	Volume	3505

ROBUSTA COFFEE

Mar	1770-1764	Nov	1551 SLR
May	1561-1550	Jan	unq
Jul	1555-1552	Mar	
Sep	1561-1557	Volume	8657

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Dec	195.3-92.1
Spot 217.6		Mar	200.5-99.0
May	201.4-01.1	May	202.5-00.5
Aug	195.5-95.1	Aug	205.5-02.5
Oct	192.8-92.1	Volume	3357

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION
Average fatstock prices at representative markets on March 17

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB	58.29	92.26	92.20
(+/−)	−5.56	−0.13	+1.46
Eng/Wales	58.28	92.82	91.40
(+/−)	−5.56	−0.92	+1.45
%	−15.0	−17.0	+1.0
Scotland	unq	91.06	97.02
(+/−)		+2.32	+1.94
%		−19.0	−8.0

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	13.25	+0.30
Brent 15 day (May)	13.55	+0.30
Brent 15 day (Jun)	13.50	+0.25
W Texas Intermediate (May)	15.35	+0.25
W Texas Intermediate (Jun)	15.25	+0.25

PRODUCTS ($/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	138 (+6)	141 (+6)
Gasoil EEC	124 (+3)	127 (+4)
3.5 Fuel Oil	59 (n/c)	61 (n/c)
Naphtha	117 (n/c)	122 (n/c)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL

Apr	118.75-19.00	Jul	120.25 SLR
May	118.75-19.00	Aug	121.75 BID
Jun	119.00-19.25	Vol	28501

BRENT (6.00pm)

May	13.51-13.53	Aug	n/a
Jun	13.47-13.50	Sep	
Jul	13.41-13.45	Vol	70792

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
Mar	73.00	Mar	74.00
May	74.75	May	74.50
Jul	76.60	Sep	74.00
Sep	75.45	Nov	76.25
Nov	77.00	Jan	78.21
Volume	420	Volume	17

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
Apr	300.0	301.0
May	unq	331.0
Jun		341.0
Volume		206

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k)
Apr 43.00-43.50

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

	High	Low	Close
Mar 99	975	970	975
Apr 99	1005	990	1005
May 99	980	980	980
Jul 99	unq	—	870
Vol 64 lots			Open interest 2265

Index 987 −8

(Official) (Volume prev day) LONDON METAL EXCHANGE Rudolf Wolff

	Cash	3mth	Vol
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	1370.0-1371.0	1400.0-1401.0	1362075
Lead ($/tonne)	499.50-500.00	502.00-503.00	302375
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1018.0-1019.0	1031.0-1032.0	361175
Tin ($/tonne)	5320.0-5330.0	5250.0-5255.0	34845
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1197.0-1198.0	1216.5-1217.0	2165625
Nickel ($/tonne)	5145.0-5155.0	5210.0-5215.0	115524

LIFFE OPTIONS

[illegible]

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol	Open Int
Long Gilt	Mar 99	117.10	117.10	117.00	117.13	295	6367
	Jun 99	117.70	117.97	117.44	117.70	37004	73260
5-Year Gilt	Mar 99				108.75	0	63
	Jun 99				108.48	0	0
Italian Govt Bond	Jun 99	113.62	113.97	113.52	113.85	8018	36600
Japanese Govt Bond	Jun 99	131.56	131.70	131.51			706
	Sep 99						0
3-Mth Sterling	Jun 99	94.870	94.950	94.870	94.940	43735	171685
	Sep 99	94.960	95.040	94.960	95.030	50885	183174
	Dec 99	94.770	94.820	94.760	94.810	10808	142156
3-Mth Euribor	Jun 99	97.110	97.155	97.110	97.150	73253	182193
	Sep 99	97.140	97.180	97.140	97.175	43166	147264
	Dec 99	96.900	96.945	96.900	96.940	13122	93633
	Mar 00	97.045	97.080	97.040	97.070	15491	78613
	Jun 00	96.965	96.995	96.960	96.985	8387	51371
3-Mth Euroswiss	Jun 99	98.630	98.670	98.630	98.650	21818	80317
	Sep 99	98.520	98.540	98.500	98.530	9837	41958
3-Mth Euro Libor	Jun 99	97.115	97.145	97.115	97.150	781	106358
	Sep 99	97.145	97.160	97.140	97.175	106	93101
	Dec 99	96.925	96.925	96.925	96.940	10	83500
	Mar 00	97.075	97.075	97.070	97.070	67	84314
	Jun 00	96.985	96.990	96.985	96.985	3	63904
FTSE 100	Mar 99	6112.0	6139.0	6077.0	6110.0	47241	92227
	Jun 99	6160.0	6180.0	6112.0	6153.0	37836	124440

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 5½ Finance House 6
Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 5½ Low 5 Week fixed: 5¼
Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy 2 mth 5¼, 3 mth 4⅞. Sell 2 mth 5, 3 mth 4⅞

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	5⅞-5⅞	5⅜-5¼	5¼-5⅛	5⅛-5¼	
Sterling Money Rates:	5¼-5⅞	5⅞-5⅛	5⅛-5¼	5¼-5⅛	5⅞-5⅞
Interbank:	5¼-5⅞	5⅞-5⅜	5⅛-5¼	5¼-5⅛	5⅞-5⅞
Overnight: open 5¼, close 5¼					
Local Authority Deps:	5¼	n/a	5⅞	5¼	5¼
Sterling CDs:	5⅞-5⅞	5⅛-5¼	5¼-5⅛	5⅛-5⅛	5⅛-5¼
Dollar CDs:	4.89	n/a	4.89	4.96	5.20
Building Society CDs:	5⅞-5¼	5¼-5¼	5⅞-5⅞	5⅞-5⅞	5⅞-5⅞

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth	Call
Dollar:	4⅞-4⅞	5-4⅞	5⅛-4⅞	5⅛-5⅛	5-4
Sterling:	5⅛-5⅛	5⅛-5⅛	5⅛-5⅛	5⅛-5⅛	5⅞-5
Euro:	3⅛-2⅞	3⅛-2⅞	3-2⅞	3⅛-2⅞	3ds-3pr
Yen:	1⅛-⅞	1⅛-1⅛	1⅛-1⅛	1⅛-1⅛	1-0pr
Canada:	4⅞-4⅞	4⅞-4⅞	5-4⅞	5⅛-4⅞	5⅛-4⅞

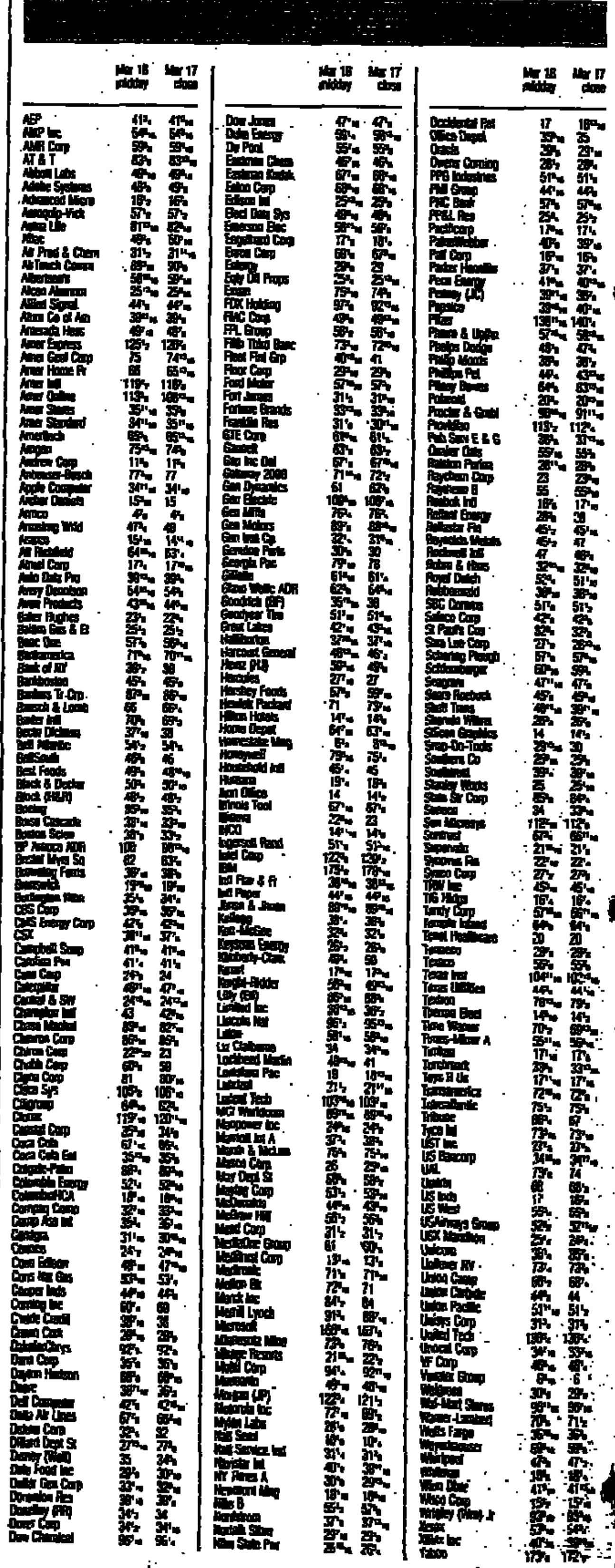
GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open: $284.00-284.30 Close: $282.90-283.40 High: $283.85-284.35
Low: $282.90-283.40 AM: $284.35 PM: $283.70
Krugerrand: $283.75-285.75 (£174.00-176.00)
Platinum: $367.50 (£222.70) Silver: $5.025 (£3.065) Palladium: $349.00 (£214.34)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for March 18	Range	Close	1 month	3 Month
Copenhagen	10.988-11.035	11.022-11.035	¼-¼pr	⅝-⅛pr
Euro	1.4828-1.4849	1.4831-1.4844	0.12-0.15ds	0.36-0.40ds
Montreal	2.4700-2.4805	2.4721-2.4753	0.10-0.03pr	0.19-0.05pr
New York	1.6280-1.6308	1.6296-1.6306	0.725-0.525pr	0.135-0.105pr
Oslo	12.543-12.610	12.543-12.563	⅛-¼ds	⅛-⅛ds
Stockholm	13.203-13.306	13.243-13.268	¼-⅛pr	⅛-⅛pr
Tokyo	191.85-193.18	191.85-192.08	⅞-¼pr	2½-2⅜pr
Zurich	2.3612-2.3719	2.3686-2.3719	⅞-⅜pr	2½-2¼pr

Source: Extel Premium = pr Discount = ds



EXCHANGE RATES

Australia	1.5855-1.5867
Canada	1.5172-1.5182
Denmark	6.7480-6.7520
Euro	0.9076-0.9083
Hong Kong	7.7490-7.7500
Japan	117.99-118.09
Malaysia	3.7998-3.8002
Norway	7.6930-7.6990
Singapore	1.7250-1.7260
Sweden	8.1178-8.1278
Switzerland	1.4499-1.4509

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6285-1.6385
Australia dollar	2.5816-2.5852
Bahrain dinar	0.6075-0.6215
Brazil real*	3.0290-3.0390
Cyprus pound	0.8490-0.8688
Euro	1.4801-1.4802
Finland markka	8.6986-8.8461
Greece drachma	468.75-479.71
Hong Kong dollar	12.4957-12.5048
India rupee	68.33-69.91
Indonesia rupiah	14415.0-15015.0
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4905-0.5019
Malaysia ringgit	6.1944-6.1989
New Zealand dollar	3.0631-3.0708
Pakistan rupee	77.80 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.8650-6.0008
Singapore dollar	2.8121-2.8155
S Africa rand	10.0660-10.2974
U A E dirham	5.9175-6.0545

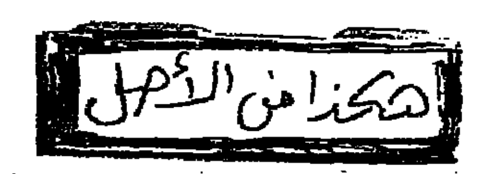
Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank

FTSE VOLUMES

3i	1,660	Land Secs	1,818
ASDA Gp	8,310	Legal & Gn	2,518
Abbey Ntl	1,978	Lloyds TSB	9,692
Allnce & Leic	2,020	LucasVarity	1,142
Allied Dom	4,963	Marks Spr	10,641
Allied Zrch	3,951	Nat Grid	9,530
Amvescap	1,687	Nat Power	8,741
AB Foods	845	NatWst Bk	5,010
Bk of Scot	3,952	Norwich Un	4,280
BAA	6,910	Orange	6,198
Barclays	5,028	P & O	6,685
Bass	3,735	Pearson	2,249
BG	7,812	PowerGen	3,081
Billiton	7,640	Prudential	12,934
BOC	928	Railtrack	3,125
Boots	2,881	Reckitt Col	1,914
BP Amoco	32,621	Reed Intl	5,765
BAe	8,501	Rentokil	6,777
BA	4,323	Reuters	3,956
Brit Am Tob	4,387	Rio Tinto	2,917
Brit Energy	7,211	Rolls Royce	8,852
BSkyB	5,668	Ryl & Sun	2,872
BT	12,462	Ryl Bk Sct	2,085
BTR Siebe	13,680	Safeway	13,442
CGU	2,376	Sainsbury	4,584
COLT Telecom	1,031	Schroders	262
Cable Wire	7,411	Scot & New	2,819
Cadbury	8,914	Scot Sthn Engy	5,598
Carlton Cms	3,190	Scot Power	4,250
Centrica	8,060	Securicor	4,935
Compass Gp	2,082	Svrn Trent	3,718
Daily Mail A	147	Shell Trans	64,367
Diageo	7,865	Smithc Ind	1,604
Dixons Grp	3,566	SmKl Bch	16,965
EMI	2,301	Stagecoach	1,762
Gallaher	2,600	Std Chartd	1,868
Gen Elec	5,555	Sun Life	2,047
GKN	2,796	TeleWest	7,090
Glaxo Well	5,184	Tesco	13,127
Granada	2,206	Thames W	568
GUS	5,178	Tomkins	6,360
GRE	9,508	Unilever	12,189
Hanson	3,170	Utd News	1,028
ICI	9,905	Utd Utilities	2,186
Imperial Tob	1,187	Vodafone	9,000
HSBC	1,385	WPP	972
Halifax	3,082	Whitbread	3,867
Hays	2,568	Williams	6,497
Kingfisher	3,913	Woolwich	3,479
Ladbroke	4,113	Zeneca	4,947

US STOCKS

	Mar 18 midday	Mar 17 close
[illegible]		



A union revolution shaped by business

A revolution in union structure has long seemed a contradiction in terms. The movement still struggles to shake off its image of cloth caps and class conflict. Yet a revolution in the way the entire union movement functions is exactly what John Monks outlined in a low-key launch earlier this week. The softly spoken General Secretary of the Trades Union Congress is adamant that unions must streamline and become more efficient if they are to prosper into the next century.

Mr Monks's model is unashamedly European. He wants to see the union movement become more like that in The Netherlands, where the Dutch FMV trade union movement is dominated by just three unions based around the manufacturing, service and public sectors.

This is in part a specific response to the new environment. Unions fear that gains enjoyed under the new Labour Government could be squandered in a bout of mafia-style turf wars. There is also a more fundamental acceptance that the workplace has changed irrevocably. Unions sprung up representing specific trades in the days when most workers were likely to remain in the same job for life. The legacy is a distinct over-concentration in the dwindling manufacturing sector and a failure effectively to penetrate newly created service-sector workforces. The TUC wants to redress this imbalance without the kind of unseemly infighting between the AEEU and TGWU that has marred the recruitment of the non-TUC Cabin Crew 89, which represents British Airways staff.

Two decades ago such a radical reform plan for one of the pillars of the country's political economy would have quickly become a key political battleground. These days, however, union initiatives are largely met by a profound political silence. The Fairness at Work legislation represents the most that Tony Blair is prepared to offer the unions. Even now, with the legislation on its way to Parliament, there have been hints that he may yet backtrack.

The Conservatives are also

THE BUSINESS OF POLITICS

ALASDAIR MURRAY

wary of treading back into the minefield of union relations, despite the success of the 1980s' de-unionisation drive. Although Conservative policy is a long way from becoming fully developed, the thrust from John Redwood, Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary, has been to attack the creeping business burden of all Labour's labour market reforms. The aim is to develop a coherent anti-regulation campaign ready for the next election.

The new union laws undoubtedly form part of this target but Mr Redwood wants to focus on the whole issue of regulation rather than begin a fresh round of union-bashing. The signs are that, while there may be amendments to the Fairness at Work legislation if the Conservatives regain power, there is little chance that the whole framework will be swept away.

As a consequence, if there is going to be any external response to the union plans it must inevitably come from employers. The temptation will be for many businesses to wash their hands of the issue or even indulge in some divide and rule tactics, actually encouraging the kind of internecine fighting that the TUC is desperate to avoid. The prospect of a mega-union led by some latter-day Scargill is not particularly appetising to British business. Business may well prefer the current position, where if unions have to be recognised at all, companies can indulge in a union "beauty parade" to select the most favourable partner.

Yet as the Confederation of British Industry recognises, the Monks plans provide a chance for business to help to remodel British industrial relations for the next century. Practically speaking, many businesses would prefer simplified union structures because dealing with a plethora of unions within one company is both administratively and strategically complex.

More importantly, however, employers have an outstanding opportunity to encourage an even more fundamental overhaul in the philosophy of the union movement. The restructuring of the union movement will inevitably involve a form of natural selection with those unions that are best able to effectively represent their members surviving, while those who remain wedded to outdated adversarial notions becoming a footnote in union history. By working with unions prepared to accept partnership rather than confrontation and embrace the previously radical notion that companies must maintain their focus on competitiveness and profits, employers can do much to influence the outcome of the debate.

For chunks of the union movement, the idea that employers have a leading role to play in reform will remain anathema. Yet some of the more moderate unions, and in particular the AEEU, are quietly encouraging businesses to make their voices heard in the restructuring process. Business should not pass up the opportunity to answer these calls.

American evangelist brings Britain the word on the Web

The Cisco kid says Internet education is vital for jobs, writes Chris Ayres

John Chambers has been likened to both an arms dealer and an evangelist. As head of Cisco Systems, the $170 billion (£105 billion) manufacturer of networking equipment — the little black boxes that make the Internet work — he makes a fortune every time a company wages war with a competitor online.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the 49-year-old executive whose personal stake in Cisco is now worth more than half a billion dollars, spends much of his time jetting around the world telling whoever will listen that the Internet "will change everything". So far, politicians and business leaders have been queuing up to meet him.

Mr Chambers claims to have met every government leader in Asia — including Jiang Zemin in China — apart from President Kim Dae Jung of South Korea. He also recently met Tony Blair in London, and he sits on one of Bill Clinton's trade advisory boards in the US. This week he is in Britain to meet Jack Cunningham, the Cabinet Minister, to discuss Internet education.

With an accent from the Deep South, tasselled brogues, and preacher's eyes, Mr Chambers appears to be a JR Ewing for the 21st century. He talks at an almost comic speed, and with an urgency rarely heard from his British counterparts. Indeed, you often feel as though he is trying save you from damnation, rather than convince you that the Internet will revolutionise business.

The message Mr Chambers is delivering this week, however, is not all positive. He will tell Mr Cunningham that Britain's education system is not yet giving young people the skills needed to compete in the Internet economy, and that fewer people are now online in Britain than in Germany. Mr Chambers says his belief that "education is the equaliser in life" was drummed into him by his parents — both of whom were doctors — and inspired him to spend nine years studying for a law degree and then for an MBA.

"There are 50,000 IT jobs open here in the UK, and the average IT job, whether it's here or anywhere else in the world, pays 50 to 100 per cent more than the average private sector job," Mr Chambers said. "That shows that we are not training people for where the jobs are. We're being brutally blunt with all governments, and saying that education systems have to change, or countries are going to get left behind."

Cisco has already set up "networking academies" throughout the US — with some recently opening in the UK — to tackle this problem.

Mr Chambers also has a word of warning for his own industry, which has recently undergone massive consolidation. In January, Lucent Technologies, the former telecoms equipment division of AT&T, bought its US rival Ascend for $20 billion. Several months earlier, Canada's Nortel paid $9.1 billion for Bay Networks.

Both deals were regarded by analysts as necessary for Lucent and Nortel to keep up with Cisco. However, many have questioned the financial logic of the deals, especially the enormous price paid for Ascend. Siemens, the German electronics group, recently described the deal as "throwing away shareholders' money".

Mr Chambers takes a similarly negative view. He said that most recent deals have been belated, overpriced, and are likely to fail. "Shareholders will look back and say, not only did the acquisition not work, but the price paid for it, in hindsight, was extremely high," he said. "The acquisition prices were probably 50 to 100 per cent higher than what we would have paid."

His judgment of Lucent's deal is particularly harsh. "I think the mathematical odds are that it will fail," Mr Chambers said. "Look at it in terms of common characteristics; look at it in terms of common vision of how the industry is going to evolve, and the role each of those companies are going to play in that evolution; look at it in terms of short-term wins.

"The most important thing in the short term is to realise that you are acquiring people, not technology or current market share. You must ask yourself if you can keep the people you have acquired. You must also consider long-term strategic advantage, and the similarity of cultures and chemistry, and finally, for large acquisitions, geographic proximity. According to my estimates, it doesn't work."

Cisco's own acquisition strategy has been on a much smaller scale to Lucent's and Nortel's, with the company holding on to employees by handing out stock. Mr Chambers — who says a big deal is "unlikely", but does not rule one out — said: "We've been the best stock to have in the world for the past ten years, and we've shared it with our employees in a way that no one has ever done before in history. I don't have to explain to any employee at Cisco the relationship between customer satisfaction and stock performance."

He is particularly fond of buying tiny Silicon Valley start-up companies.

"Silicon Valley is the most exciting place in the world," he said. "It doesn't matter what sex you are, what age you are, what your religion is, or who your parents are: if you're good, we love you, and if you're not, you're on your own."

A resident in the Los Altos hills above Silicon Valley himself, Mr Chambers spends his spare time downloading music from the Internet on to his electronic piano.

Cisco itself began life as a Silicon Valley start-up in 1996, founded by Len Bosack and Sandy Lerney, a geeky academic couple at Stanford University. While trying to send messages to each other via their computers, they invented "routers" — devices which act like signposts for information travelling across computer networks — and set up a company, Cisco, to develop the technology. Needless to day, routers ended up becoming a central part of the Internet, giving Cisco dominance in a market growing at a ferocious speed.

The couple initially funded the company on credit cards, then brought in venture capitalists. However, the founders and venture capitalists fell out, with Mr Bosack and Ms Lerney leaving Cisco and selling their shares in the company in the early 1990s. Then, the shares were worth only 25 cents. Now, they are worth more than $106. Mr Bosack is now believed to be studying "extraterrestrial intelligence", while Ms Lerney runs a cosmetics company.

Mr Chambers joined Cisco in 1991 — having worked at Wang and IBM previously — a year after the company floated on the Nasdaq stock exchange in the US.

Cisco is now Nasdaq's third largest company, behind Intel and Microsoft. Its shares may trade on a staggering rating of 129 times earnings, but, unlike many Internet companies, it made a thumping after-tax profit last year of $1.36 billion, on sales of $10 billion.

The enormity of the task facing him is clear to Mr Chambers: to maintain Cisco's dominance in a rapidly moving market, with the US Government's anti-trust regulators breathing down his neck. The company has already faced one inquiry into whether it tried to carve up the market for data communications equipment with Lucent and Nortel — an accusation Mr Chambers denies.

"I like my peers, and I enjoy competing, and I think my company will be stronger because of competing ethically and above board," he said. "It means I'll have more market share in five years' time than if we were more aggressive."

PETER TREVNOR



Medium message: John Chambers says Britain's education system is not yet giving people skills needed for the Internet

Moulton turns Alchemy into pure gold

They have not discovered a way of turning base metals into gold, but in the past two years the Alchemy Partners have certainly found the secret to turning a good deal.

The management buyout of Goldsmiths, the chain of upmarket jewellers, is the latest in a long line of deals by the venture capitalist firm, which was set up in January 1997 by Jon Moulton, managing partner, and four partners. They included Martin Bolland, the former chief executive of Lonrho's Princess Metropole Hotel chain, and Eric Walters, with whom Moulton had worked at Schroder Ventures.

It was through Schroder Ventures that Moulton and Walters had got to know Goldsmiths, and Jurek Piasecki, its chairman and chief executive. Eleven years ago it backed an earlier buyout of Goldsmiths from Oriflame. When Moulton moved from Schroders to Apax he also spent many fruitless months working with Piasecki on an attempt to buy the Ernest Jones jewellery chain from the Signet Group.

Another deal that is in the pipeline, but appears to be in a fairly parlous state, is the the proposed MBO of Swallow Group's Vaux Breweries. This follows the recent acquisition by Alchemy of Ushers of Trowbridge, and a failed attempt to arrange a buyout of Regal Hotels. Alchemy is keen on hotel deals, and is looking at at least one other management buyout.

Some of Alchemy's attempted retail deals have also fallen to one side in recent months, most notably the proposed acquisition of Allied Carpets, and of Watches of Switzerland. And some of the companies that have not gone to Alchemy have been less than flattering about its methods, suggesting that it has tried to rush them into deals that, in their view, would have seriously undervalued the companies in question.

Last year, Alchemy performed the feat, astonishing for such a recent arrival, of becoming the second-largest provider of private equity in the UK. It was behind only 3i and ahead of such established names as NatWest Equity Partners and Electra Fleming.

Acquisitions Monthly, which prepared the league table, noted Moulton's ability to extract value from difficult deals. It also remarked that "his relaxed attitude to risk produces the odd poorly performing investment among the many successes". Alchemy targeted a number of turnround situations, including Sunley Turriff, the construction company, and Moore Paragon, a designer and manufacturer of business forms and labels.

The total number of deals carried out by Alchemy last year was 21, well behind 3i's 53. But the value was a hefty £234 million, not too far shy of 3i's £309 million.

With so many small quoted companies giving up on an uncaring stock market, Alchemy's skills in returning them safely to the private sector look certain to be called upon frequently for the rest of this year.

SARAH CUNNINGHAM

BUSINESS LETTER

Experience is key to work with Britain in Europe

From Judith Mayhew

Dear Sir, The City Diary implied on Thursday March 18 that my membership of Britain in Europe was only linked to my role in the Corporation of London.

Whilst that experience and viewpoint may be of value to the task force, it misrepresents entirely the value brought to the party as a result of the stature and profile of my firm Wilde Sapte.

We have played a significant role in Europe, advising major financial institutions on EMU matters. Our partner in charge of our Brussels office James Ashe-Taylor was profiled in "A mission to explain the new currency" in *The Times* on December 23, 1998.

Furthermore we worked with NatWest and KPMG (also involved with Britain in Business) to produce an EMU guide for business.

Ironically we, and not a Frankfurt law firm, wrote the Euro Planner Fact Book for the German Chambers of Commerce, which they are now using throughout Europe.

Surely this is a fairer portrayal of the experience the Britain in Europe group is availing itself of in inviting a lawyer on to its membership.

Yours faithfully,
JUDITH MAYHEW,
Director of Training,
Wilde Sapte,
1 Fleet Place,
London EC4M 7WS.

King rat

AS WE await the forthcoming Nick Leeson biopic with varying degrees of anticipation, I learn of one significant detail that is unlikely to be in the film, which stars Ewan *Trainspotting* McGregor and Anna *Brookside* Friel.

It is known that one unnamed Hong Kong fund manager fingered Leeson four years ago; we have never known who this was. My in-depth researches suggest — oh, all right, someone has told me — that it was none other than Colin Armstrong, at the time with Jardine Fleming. My source is reliably close to Flemings itself, which owns half of the business.

This is ironic, because Armstrong was himself at the centre of another scandal at Jardine the next year, the so-called "rat trades" affair that cost the firm a £700,000 fine, £12 million in compensation and its reputation. He has since gone to ground and is unlikely to be the subject of a forthcoming film.

THE level of bonuses at Merrill Lynch seems to be breeding a degree of dissatisfaction. One of the top-rated European telecoms team has been poached by a rival. Simon Carrington is joining Schroders. Other rumours of top-level changes at the American investment bank are being denied. We shall see.



Bull market

SOME startling news from Guildhall. The forthcoming elections for two sheriffs are going to be as close to a genuine democratic poll as the City has seen for some years now.

Someone has passed me the unofficial list of four candidates, and it seems even officials at the Corporation of London are conceding that it is an open field and anyone could win.

The first is Robert Finch, an alderman and very much the official candidate. If he wins, he would be only a couple of years off being Lord Mayor. But he is standing against Anthony Bull, a long-time rebel.

The other two are Pauline Halliday, a member of the court of common council, and Hugh Harris, once at the Bank of England. Both, too, are "official" candidates, that is, favoured by Guildhall.

But with four people standing, there is every chance that the vote among liverymen will be split, so allowing in Bull, who has attracted sympathy because of the way he has been treated in the past. If he wins, there is little to stop him being Lord Mayor in due course, an outturn that would deeply upset the powers that be.



COLIN CHILD, finance director of National Express, was startled to run into a youth wearing a T-shirt featuring the company's new logo, a sort of stylised NX. National Express may be fashionable at the moment, having inspired a hit pop single, but the new logo hadn't even been announced yet.

Surprise turned to concern when he discovered that the T-shirt, far from celebrating his coaches and trains, was from Next, which has patented the NX logo for the past seven years. National Express is only using the logo on its letterheads, but it might be best not to tip off Next anyway. So don't tell anyone I told you.

Cashing in

LAST week I wrote of the visit to Britain of King Mswati III of Swaziland. After visiting the City, he attended a seminar of British firms keen to invest in his country.

I now learn that the King has used the trip to take swift action to stamp out the growing problem in his homeland of counterfeit bank notes. In the past fortnight alone police have seized notes worth £500,000.

King Mswati visited the Basingstoke offices of De La Rue on Thursday and immediately hired the firm to produce notes in future, replacing a German competitor which has had the job for several decades.

I suppose that if you are a king you can do that sort of thing quite quickly. Incidentally, when I wrote of his visit to the City we ran a picture of the wrong king. Here is the correct one.

MARTIN WALLER

city.diary@the-times.co.uk



King Mswati III of Swaziland

Equities stage late rally

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

[illegible]

BANKS

[illegible]

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

[illegible]

BUILDING MATERIALS

[illegible]

CHEMICALS

[illegible]

CONSTRUCTION

[illegible]

DISTRIBUTORS

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DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

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ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

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MINING

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OIL & GAS

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OTHER FINANCIAL

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PHARMACEUTICALS

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PRINTING & PAPER

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PROPERTY

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RETAILERS, FOOD

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RETAILERS, GENERAL

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SUPPORT SERVICES

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TELECOMMUNICATIONS

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TRANSPORT

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WATER

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ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

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BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

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MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

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LONGS (over 15 years)

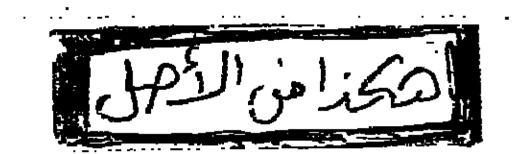
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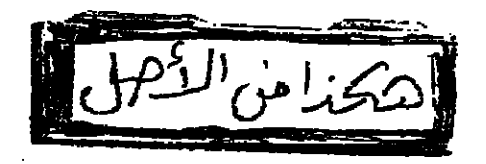
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INDEX-LINKED

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National Express plan aims to speed franchise renewal

By Fraser Nelson

NATIONAL EXPRESS, Britain's largest train operator, is to try for an early extension of its five rail franchises by offering to link the level of subsidies it receives with performance.

Phil White, chief executive, will tell John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, that he is also prepared to share its revenues with Railtrack rather than pay fixed charges to the track operator.

The company intends to sumbit its proposals in the next few months — effectively giving Mr Prescott a chance to remould the financial system currently governing the rail network.

Mr White said: "We will have finished our proposals in the next few months. Linking subsidy to performance would not worry me at all — we perform well, and have nothing to fear."

Mr Prescott is known to be dissatisfied with the current fixed subsidy system which delivers heavy state payouts regardless of how many trains are run on time. He has made it known that the Government intends to grant its first franchise extensions this year, and would like to reduce the number of companies that run the 25 networks.

The five National Express networks cover 3,910 miles out of the entire 15,200-mile train network. Three of its franchises expire by 2004 and two in 2015.



ANDRE CAMARA

Phil White, left, and Colin Child, deputy chief executive, believe they have nothing to fear if subsidy is linked with performance

The company yesterday reported that its rail division lifted underlying profits by 32 per cent over 1998, to £25.9 million. Group pre-tax profits came in at £97 million (£54.8 million).

The core National Express coach division saw profits decline slightly to £11.6 million (£11.9 million) which it blames partly on Easter travel being affected by bad weather.

Mr White said the company's overseas expansion strategy will be focused on Australia and the US. It has been shortlisted for four of Melbourne's five privatised train and tram networks — beating opposition from its UK rivals Stagecoach and FirstGroup.

In the US, it said it is in advanced talks with "a number" of small school bus companies. Mr White said: "We have got to the due diligence stage. We need to get some critical mass in the school bus market around a few states and build from there."

The UK bus division increased underlying profits by 12 per cent to £45.6 million. It has set aside about £30 million which it could spend helping local councils with road improvements and building bus lanes.

Earnings were 54.8p (45.1p) a share. The total dividend rises to 16p (13.5p) with a final 11.3p.

Mansfield issues warning

Shares of Mansfield Brewery closed 23p lower at 210p after the brewer and pub operator gave warning that full-year profits would be below market expectations. HSBC Securities cut its forecast for the year to March 27 from £22.4 million to £21 million.

A 4.5 per cent decline in like-for-like sales in its managed pub estate and falling beer sales were blamed. Mansfield is taking a £1.9 million exceptional charge against the cost of a restructuring aimed at saving £1.6 million in annual costs.

Nedlloyd sale

Nedlloyd, the Dutch shipping and transport group, has raised 1.175 billion guilders (£360 million) through the sale of its European transport and distribution operations to Deutsche Post. Nedlloyd's sole remaining business is a 50 per cent stake in the P&O Nedlloyd joint venture with Britain's P&O.

Centre refocus

Town Centre Securities, the property investment and development company, said revenues in the second half would be affected by the refocusing of its property portfolio. In the first half pretax profits rose to £7.1 million from £5.9 million, helped by a £1.9 million surplus from disposals. The interim dividend rises to 1.3p a share from 1.27p.

HR Owen ahead

Nick Lancaster, managing director of HR Owen, the upmarket car dealer, has acquired 968,000 shares in the company for £1.38 million, lifting his stake above 26 per cent. Yesterday the company reported a 46 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £6 million in 1998. A 5p final dividend makes a total of 10p, up 25 per cent.

Fisher falls

James Fisher, the shipping and port services company, suffered a fall in pre-tax profits from £8.78 million to £3.85 million in 1998 after charging £2.86 million against the closure of operations at the port of Newhaven. The total dividend rises to 3.75p a share from 3.2p, with a final 2.35p.

Churchill slides

Shares of Churchill China fell 9½p to 86p after the tableware manufacturer said the first half of 1999 was likely to see a further deterioration in profitability. The company reported 1998 pre-tax profits of £1.47 million, down from £6.1 million. There is no final dividend, leaving the total dividend at just 3p (14.3p).

Fall in price of oil forces Borneo to scrap payout

By Martin Barrow

DEPRESSED oil prices have forced British-Borneo Oil and Gas to scrap its final dividend.

Yesterday the company reported a net loss of £82 million for 1998, compared with a profit of £14 million for the previous 12 months, as a result of provisions and write-offs precipitated by the sharp fall in the price of crude.

Total exceptional charges were £62.9 million, which included a writedown of £48.9 million against the impairment of fixed assets and capitalised goodwill and a £14 million provision after the abandonment of two North Sea oilfields.

Last year's average oil price of $13.34 a barrel was a 22-year low, and 23 per cent below the 1997 average. The effect of low oil prices and production delays at the Morpeth field in the Gulf of Mexico was to reduce cashflow and substantially increase year-end borrowings.

The company has identified assets for disposal as it seeks to reduce debts, which at the year end were £377.4 million (£55.4 million).

The merger with Hardy Oil & Gas, a rival exploration and production company, was completed last October and has achieved annualised cost savings of £8 million.

Alan Gaynor, chief executive, said it was too early to say if oil prices were now off their lows, but said he would be surprised if Brent crude was not back in the $15 to $20 a barrel range within 12 to 18 months.

He said: "The key thing is we're running the business on a basis where it is robust, and indeed increasingly robust, at $10, just to make sure we're OK should we have a prolonged period of low oil price."

British-Borneo's net production is set to increase fivefold to some 100,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day (boepd) over the next 18 months. Output climbed to 20,274 boepd last year from 14,174 boepd in 1997.

Mr Gaynor said that the Morpeth field, which incurred substantial cost overruns before entering production in October, is now set to reach peak production, about 35,000 barrels per day, next month.

In the absence of a final dividend the total dividend falls to 1p a share from 2.75p. British-Borneo shares fell 2p to 134p yesterday, against a 12-month high of 399p.

☐ Edinburgh Oil & Gas reported a 1998 loss of £780,000 before tax, compared with a profit of £509,000 in 1997. The annual dividend is held at 0.3p a share.

Deutsche Bank raises £2bn to fund takeover

From A Correspondent in Frankfurt

DEUTSCHE BANK, Germany's largest commercial bank, is raising DM6 billion (£2 billion), to help to fund its takeover of Bankers Trust in America.

The cash call is much higher than expected. When the $10.1 billion (£6 billion) Bankers Trust deal was announced last year, Deutsche Bank said it would need to raise about DM4 billion.

Yesterday Rolf Breuer, Deutsche Bank chairman, said the larger than expected capital increase was also necessary to take full advantage of opportunities to penetrate the European market.

Despite lawsuits by Holocaust victims, Herr Breuer said yesterday that he expects Deutsche Bank's acquisition of Bankers Trust to be completed by June.

Deutsche Bank is one of several German companies facing class-action suits in the US filed by Holocaust survivors, accusing them of profiting from slave labour or the Nazi expropriation of Jewish assets. The lawsuits could delay regulatory approval of the takeover.

Deutsche Bank also announced that net profits more than trebled to DM3.38 billion from DM1.02 billion in 1997.

Earnings were boosted by extraordinary gains from a special bonus dividend paid out by DaimlerChrysler last year. Deutsche Bank has a 12 per cent stake in DaimlerChrysler.

Financial crises in Russia, South-East Asia and Latin America pushed trading profits down nearly 4 per cent to DM3.47 billion.

Dialog admits to slow progress of integration

By Robert Lea

INVESTORS in Dialog Corporation, Dan Wagner's online information business formerly known as MAID, breathed a sigh of relief as the company's full-year results did not throw up any new warnings about the company's progress.

This, and market curiosity over Mr Wagner's plans for the group's fledgeling Internet software and e-commerce businesses saw the shares put on 11 per cent yesterday.

The company yesterday admitted that the integration of its £265 million acquisition in 1997 of Knight Ridder Information has been slower than it had hoped, while revenues, which it said would be up 10 per cent, were in fact flat.

Servicing the cost of the KRI acquisition and the ensuing debt mountain, standing at £157 million at year end was the "key objective" of the board. In addition to paying interest charges, the company has debt repayments totalling £13.5 million this year that will fall due from May. Mr Wagner said that the company may seek to reschedule the debt.

There has been speculation that the Internet and e-commerce businesses may be floated. However, Mr Wagner said that the company would rather bring in investing partners or raise money through licensing agreements.

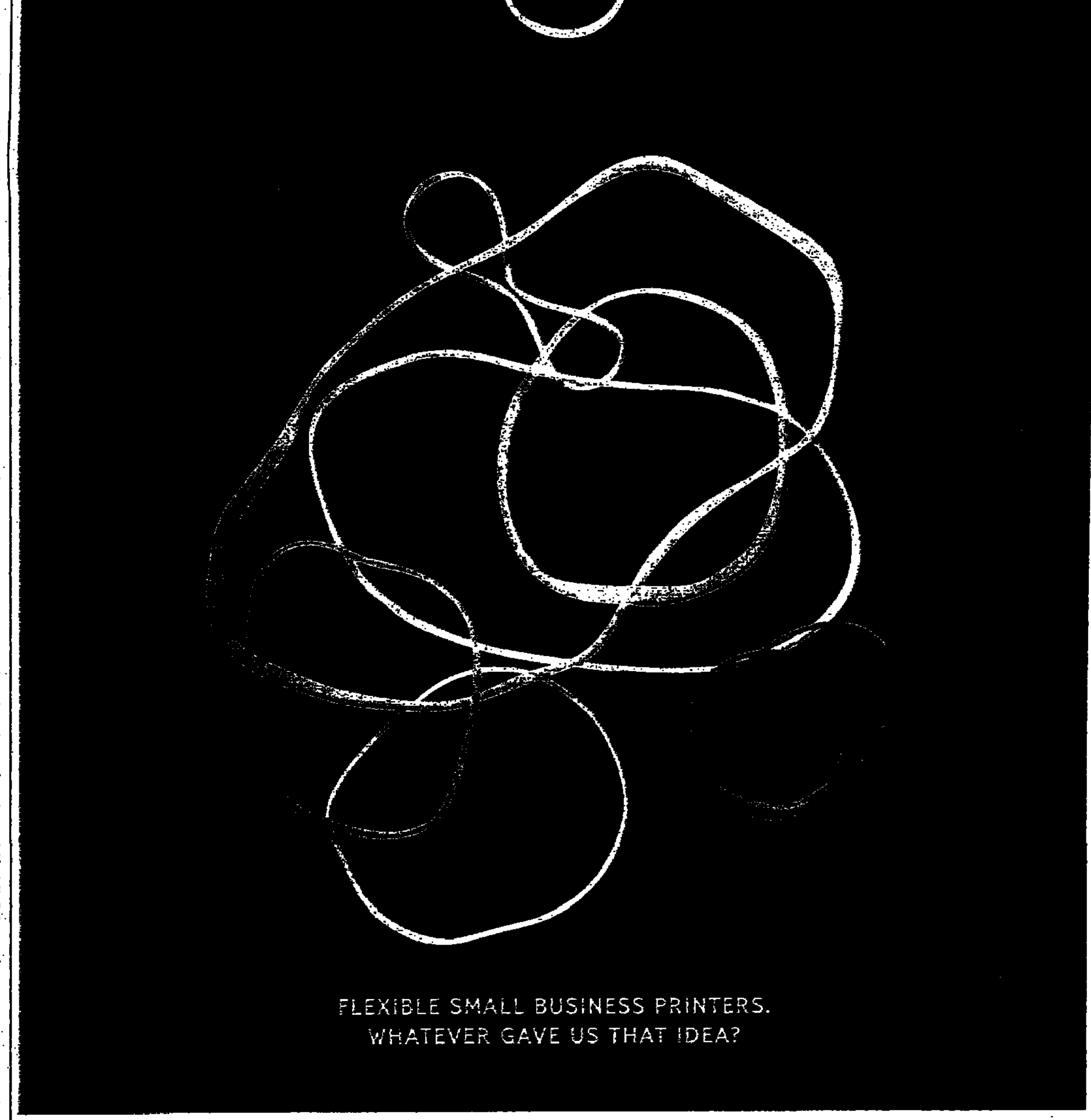
Revenues in 1998, skewed by a first full-year inclusion of KRI, came in at £170 million producing pre-tax profits of £5.5 million after exceptional costs of £2.8 million. Earnings per share were 2.9p against losses per share of 20.5p in 1997. The shares, which fell as low as 47p, were up 9½p to 94½p yesterday. Last summer they peaked at 236½p.

McAlpine promise on growth

ALFRED MCALPINE yesterday promised that better land purchasing will be key to achieving targets of earnings increases of at least 15 per cent a year for the next three years (Adam Jones writes).

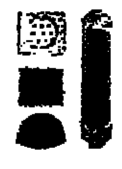
Shares of the housebuilding and construction group ticked up from 167p to 174p on the news of the pledge.

For 1998, profits before tax and exceptionals rose 41 per cent to £34 million on turnover up 9 per cent at £720 million. The operating profit margin from private housing rose from 8.7 per cent to 10.2 per cent. House reservations are currently up 14 per cent on 1998. A dividend of 4.8p per share will be paid, making a total of 8p (7.5p) for the year.





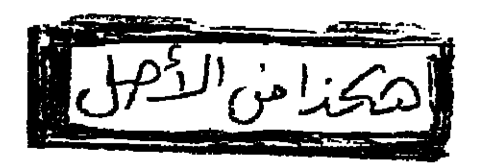






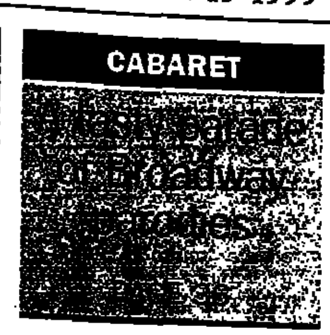
THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
ACM INVESTMENTS LTD				
0171 470 0100				
Glbl Dis Gilt	139.30	140.60	- 0.10	..
US Govt Sd (US$)	0.8468	0.8566		
Gilt Income	55.38	56.24	- 0.20	5.40
Gilt Growth	101.20	102.80	- 0.30	..
Sterling Bond	56.40	57.40†	- 0.23	5.50
AIB GOVETT UNIT TRUST LTD				
0171 378 7979 Dealing: 0171 407 7888				
Protected Funds				
UK Safeguard	147.36	152.04	+ 0.23	..
-do- NAV to Jan 79	140.39	140.39	..	..
UK Equity Safeguard	117.62	125.80	- 0.18	2.02
-do- NAV to Mar 79	110.98	110.98		
US Eqy Safeguard	97.96	104.02	- 0.14	..
Cash	954.73	950.57		6.25
UK Growth Funds				
UK Equity Gen	435.17	462.88	- 7.73	1.00
UK Small Cos	95.77	102.42	- 0.01	0.50
FTSE 250 Index	111.02	118.73	- 0.35	1.89
Geared UK Index	#24.573	#25.940	- 0.14	5.75
Income Funds				
Corp Bd	88.01	90.97	- 0.29	6.66
Monthly Inc	43.32	46.33†	- 0.76	7.98
International Funds				
American Gen	385.37	410.47	- 5.11	0.17
American Sml	176.73	188.64	+ 0.33	
JG US Index	#30.549	#32.185	- 0.04	4.50
European Gen	445.71	471.30	- 1.29	
European Sml	208.10	222.56	- 1.95	
Japan Gen	114.77	121.08	- 2.41	
Asia Pacific	64.51	68.79	- 0.68	1.09
Pacific Sml	92.35	98.66	- 0.61	
Greater China	154.06	164.79	- 1.09	
Latin America	65.73	69.60	- 0.43	
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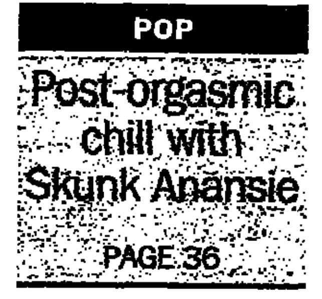


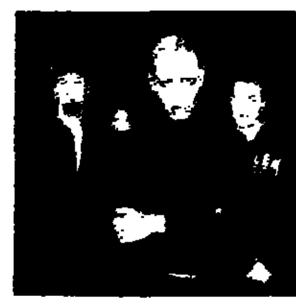
CABARET



THE TIMES ARTS

POP





And now, the Prim Minister of Australia

Has the country that gave a grateful world such earthy figures as Mad Max, Dame Edna Everage, Crocodile Dundee and Germaine Greer now turned into a land of prudes? Can the nation of sun, surf, sex and sheep suddenly have succumbed to sad suburban prissiness? So it seems. For Australia appears to be on the verge of banning *Lolita*, the recent film version of Nabokov's novel by the British director Adrian Lyne — even though its censor has approved the movie.

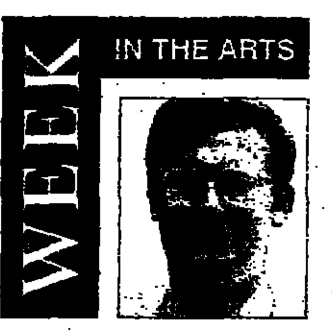
What's more, the Prime Minister *himself*, John Howard, has led the charge of the repressives against what they describe as a "sick and bizarre portrayal of paedophilia". Howard seems to be unaware that the film, starring Jeremy Irons in his customary world-weary dissolute mode, has already been screened in 19 countries (including Britain and America) without inciting any noticeable breakdowns in public order or morality. Or perhaps he believes that Aussies have such chaste sensibilities, poor lambs, that they need more protection than people elsewhere.

But maybe the real reason for Howard's threat to ban *Lolita* is simple political calculation — as his opponents claim. His Government's fragile majority largely depends on the goodwill of one crusty independent senator, Brian Harradine, and Harradine is a noted campaigner in the Mary Whitehouse mould, tireless in his tirades against media "smut" wherever he imagines it to be lurking. Howard needs Harradine's support, and so Harradine's fixations have become Howard's as well. Thus are the great issues of artistic freedom decided in one of the world's most stridently self-righteous democracies.

Of course, Howard's opposition to *Lolita* provokes fury in liberal Australia. The Office of Film and Literature Classification, defending its "R18" certificate for *Lolita*, even cites experts from the chillingly named Australian Institute of Criminology to support its view that *Lolita* is a "serious artistic work" that "does not offend against standards accepted by reasonable adults" (as opposed to Prime Ministers, presumably).

Now the Aussie press is hurling itself into the debate, though its contributions don't always clarify the central issues. The *Canberra Times*, for instance, applauds Howard's censorial instincts, but says he is banning the wrong things. Instead of attacking the "sexual naughtiness" of *Lolita*, the paper says, he should be combating "Hollywood's unchecked bombardment of this sweet little country with foreign, cynical, unAustralian, psychosis-inducing, massacre-inciting products". Phew. Or as they say in Canberra, strewth.

WEEK IN THE ARTS



RICHARD MORRISON

I wish I could come to Australia's aid, in this hour of national crisis, by offering my own views on *Lolita*, but I can't. When I went to see the film — out of a purely professional desire to be corrupted beyond redemption, you understand — I am afraid I fell asleep during what older film critics call "the first reel". You may surmise three reasons for that: a) I had sipped enthusiastically from a range of fine wines earlier in the evening; b) I am so far advanced beyond normal depravity that the film made no impression on my jaded senses; c) it is a crashingly boring adaptation of a grossly overrated book.

Alas, all three are true. Australians should really find something better to do with their time than huffing and puffing over this piffling effort. No wonder they have started to lose at cricket. If they carry on trying to reinstate the pious and hypocritical morality of the Victorian era, they will soon be applying to rejoin the British Empire.

Meanwhile in America a different sort of cultural clash is exciting the chattering classes. A Princeton University music professor is suing a rock band for playing so loudly that they have allegedly damaged his hearing. Peter Jeffrey is an expert in the somewhat more restrained musical ambience of Gregorian chant, and had never been to a rock concert before a fateful night two years ago when he stepped inside a Smashing Pumpkins gig in New Haven for just 20 minutes, apparently to look for his son.

Being on the Des O'Connor side of 40, he had even taken the precaution of inserting earplugs. Even so, he claims that the decibels being pumped out by the all-too-smashing Pumpkins caused hearing loss in his left ear, buzzing in both ears, and "sleep deprivation". He is now suing the group for exceeding a safe decibel level that they "knew or should have known" about. I fear that he may have an inflated opinion of the scientific expertise to be expected from a rock band. But since this is America, he is also suing the city of New Haven, the hall's owners, the band's record label (Virgin), the two supporting bands, and even the company that made the earplugs. The only surprise is that he isn't suing his son for not waiting in the car park.

Should he win, of course, the floodgates will open. If just 20 minutes of exposure to the pounding of a rock band in full pelt can wreak such havoc on a pair of plugged-up ears, what damage has been done to the naked lug'oles of the millions who regularly attend rock venues? Will the music business soon have to follow the tobacco industry's reluctant example, and set aside billions of pounds to settle mass lawsuits from those who claim they "didn't know" how dangerous its pleasures were?

It's quite a thought, isn't it? So the next time you pop into the Brixton Academy for a spot of aggravated headbanging, do remember to take your lawyer and doctor along as well. All three of you might find the show unexpectedly rewarding.

Marsha mellow

SIMON BROOKE-WEBB



Together again: Marsha Mason teams up in London with her ex-husband Neil Simon and co-star Richard Dreyfuss

THEATRE: Marsha Mason's West End debut also marks a reunion, says Matt Wolf

For almost a decade from the mid-Seventies Marsha Mason was a major Hollywood name, garnering four Oscar nominations for best actress within eight years. But youth is what the Hollywood studios now want, and Meryl Streep is virtually the only actress of Mason's generation who regularly gets screen work.

Like Streep, Mason began in the theatre: unlike Streep, she has chosen to return there, regularly appearing off Broadway in recent years. And this month she makes her London stage debut in *The Prisoner of Second Avenue*, and the American comedy marks a reunion of sorts: her co-star is Richard Dreyfuss, Mason's Oscar-winning colleague from *The Goodbye Girl* 22 years ago, and the 1971 play was written by Mason's ex-husband, Neil Simon. "We have always had a very strong professional relationship, so that part is really kind of nice," says Mason. "We both have a great deal of affection for one another."

Mason had already completed her career-making film performance, playing a hooker with an illegitimate son in *Cinderella Liberty*, when she and Simon met during auditions for his 1973 Broadway play, *The Good Doctor*. "We started rehearsals October 3 and were married on October 25," Mason recalls of their swift courtship. "It all got crunched into a very intense period."

Intensifying matters further was the fact that Simon was still coping with the death from cancer three months earlier of his first wife, Joan. Mason's arrival in his life ultimately fed Simon's popular (and semi-autobiographical) play *Chapter Two*, as well as its subsequent film version, which — no surprise — starred Mason.

The couple were together for eight years, and Mason looks back on that period as "a two-edged sword, at least in terms of the world we were in. A lot of people thought of me only doing Neil's material, and consequently they didn't always consider me for certain things I might have been right for. And the commitment to the marriage precluded me going away for long periods of time."

Nor was she prepared for her burgeoning fame. "I was basically very intimidated by what I had achieved. In retrospect, it's one of my great regrets that I didn't enjoy myself more. I was much, much more into struggle than I was into success." Once the relationship with Simon ended, jobs began to dry up. Says Mason: "The 1980s were a very rough time: I did work, but I worked less and less each year." A failed TV series, *Sibs*, created by James L. Brooks (*As Good As It Gets*), was followed by various forgettable films, and Mason became alarmed.

"I began to feel very scared that I was out of tune, that maybe I didn't understand the milieu or the media. It was the first time that I began to doubt practically everything." What got the actress through it? Her move away from the ceaselessly competitive New York-LA axis to Abiquiu, New Mexico, where she grows medicinal herbs on a 250-acre farm and races a Mazda, having developed a passion for the latter from Paul Newman.

Professionally, she has found a home of sorts in independent films, the occasional TV appearance, and the realisation that the stage can provide material in a way that — once you reach a certain age — TV and the cinema cannot.

"I can pretty much go anywhere to do what I want to do. At least the parts I can go for on stage are pretty exciting."

Whatever else happens, Mason will be able to say that she played London. "You find yourself thinking, 'What if you only have a certain amount of time to be an actor?' At least I'll be able to sit in my rocking chair and share stories about when I played the West End. Every actor in the world would like to do that."

● *The Prisoner of Second Avenue previews from next Tuesday and opens on March 30 at the Theatre Royal Haymarket (0171-930 8800)*

With the Edinburgh Festival's Perrier Award having been painted several shades of green in recent years (Dylan Moran and Tommy Tiernan take a bow), the visibility of Irish comedians in the UK has never been higher.

Accordingly, the live comedy circuit in Ireland is expanding to meet the demand. Last year saw the opening of Dublin's Laughter Lounge, and now comes the inaugural Guinness Sit-Down, Stand-Up Comedy Festival (organised by the Corduroy Comedy Club), which is currently running in Dublin's Vicar St, a sumptuous new venue that boasts a capacity of 600 with the seats in.

Although primarily a music venue, Vicar St is an excellent place to view stand-up comedy, its well-spaced tables and table service lending a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

The festival kicked off on St Patrick's Night with Kevin McAleer, one of Irish comedy's best loved comedic sons, who used the occasion to relaunch his stand-up career after a long spell in television studios. Most of the early part of the set consisted of new material that the Tyrone comedian is planning to take to this year's Edinburgh Festival. At his best, as with his routine on vegetarianism, McAleer seems like the best comedian in Ireland, his soft-spoken northern brogue masking a hard-hitting invective on socially sanctioned violence. His child-like delivery conceals subject-matter that is deadly serious.

Troubles to bear

COMEDY

Kevin McAleer
Dublin

Where to place him? When he takes off on surreal flights of fancy, McAleer seems like the true heir to Flann O'Brien: when he indulges his passion for word-play and language manipulation, the spirit of Joyce seems to hover over him. But things went awry when he misjudged a politically sensitive gag on the Troubles — a subject McAleer had hitherto done well on.

Now on the back foot, McAleer reverted to tried and tested material about his childhood in Tyrone, recounting the same madcap stories of rural psychedelia with which he made his name. All fine and dandy, but McAleer should be looking to sweep the ball forward, not pass it back to the goalkeeper.

NICK KELLY









■ LISTINGS

Simon Gray premiere

■ OPERA

Knussen by the double

ARTS

RECOMMENDED THIS WEEKEND

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargie

LONDON

DAS LIED VON DER ERDE: The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra resumes its series *Mahler — The Spectacle*. Giuseppe Sinopoli conducts Mahler's great "song symphony" prefaced by the Adagio from Symphony No 10.
Albert Hall (0171-589 8212). Sunday, 7.30pm. Ⓢ

A LOVELY SUNDAY FOR CREVE COEUR: Late Tennessee Williams play where four thirtysomething women do and don't want to go for a lakeside picnic. Jenny Sealey directs for Graeae Theatre.
Drill Hall (0171-637 8270). Opens tonight, 7.30pm.

JERUSALEM QUARTET: Fast acquiring an international reputation this young, prize-winning foursome visits the Wigmore with a programme of Haydn, Shostakovich and Beethoven.
Wigmore Hall (0171-935 2141). Tomorrow, 7.30pm. Ⓢ

SNAKE: Interesting-sounding play by Rona Munro, snaking round the experiences of five people whose lives interconnect along the Finchley Road. Gemma Bodinetz directs.
Hampstead Theatre (0171-722 9301). Ⓢ Opens tonight, 7pm.



Sinopoli conducts Mahler at the Albert Hall

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: The 1997 Cardiff Singer of the World, Guang Yang, and the winner of the Nordic Soloist Biennale in 1991, clarinettist Martin Fröst, join the Philharmonia Orchestra for a concert of classical showpieces including works by Mahler, Copland and Dvořák. David Zinman conducts.
Symphony Hall (0121-212 3333). Tonight, 8pm. Ⓢ

EDINBURGH: *Memory and Other Props* and *Fine Frenzy*, the two collaborations between the award-winning choreographer Shobana Jeyasingh and top jazz man Django Bates, continue to take audiences by storm. One night here only.
Traverse (0131-228 1404). Tomorrow, 8pm. Ⓢ

WATFORD: Husband, wife, son, and piano teacher interweave in The Late Middle Classes, Simon Gray's new dark comedy. Harold Pinter directs Harriet Walter and Angela Pleasence.
Palace (01923 225671). Ⓢ Previews from tonight, 8pm.

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London
■ House full, returns only ◪ Some seats available ☐ Seats at all prices

■ **THE COLLEEN BAWN:** Dublin's Abbey Theatre brings Conall Morrison's production of a once famous Dion Boucicault play: love and intrigue across the classes in 19th-century Ireland.
Lyttelton (0171-452 3000). Ⓢ

☐ **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY:** A second try by New York's long-running intimate revue (showbiz jokes, mostly) to adapt for London audiences. See review, right.
Jermyn Street Theatre (0171-287 2875).

☐ **LOW FLYING AIRCRAFT:** Set in a future transformed by the vast city of Heathrow four ordinary people try to cope. Dominic Hill directs new Jane Coles play.
Orange Tree (0181-940 3633). Ⓢ

☐ **ANIMAL CRACKERS:** Ben Keaton, Joe Alessi and Toby Sedgwick play the three maniacs in a stage version of the Marx Brothers movie. First seen at Manchester's Royal Exchange.
Lyric (0171-494 5045).

☐ **HAMLET:** Rupert Wickham plays the hero in Christopher Geelan's production, opening this relaunched theatre.
Greenwich (0870-840 1111). Ⓢ

☐ **TRUST:** Patrick O'Kane plays a Belfast Mr Fixit whose skills disastrously fail his own family. Mick Gordon directs new Gary Mitchell drama.
Ambassadors (0171-565 5000).

◪ **MACBETH:** Rufus Sewell and Sally Dexter play the superstitious thane and his missis in John Crowley's neo-brutalist production.
Queens, W1 (0171-494 5041).

☐ **SHOCKHEADED PETER:** The Scissorman is back: wonderfully sinister show by the Cultural Industry team with the Tiger Lillies and Martyn Jacques's falsetto screech.
Lyric (0181-741 8701). Ⓢ

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

ARLINGTON ROAD (15): Nerve-shredding thriller with a magnificent performance by Jeff Bridges as a paranoid professor who thinks his neighbour, Tim Robbins, is hatching a terrorist conspiracy. Mark Pellington directs.

WAKING NED (PG): It's Lottery Galore! for a small village in this slushy Irish fable about a corpse in charge of a winning lottery ticket. With Ian Bannen and David Kelly. Kirk Jones directs

SEUL CONTRE TOUS (I STAND ALONE) (18): Brutal, stomach-churning voyage through a French butcher's life. Philippe Nahon puts in a monumental performance in Gaspar Noe's ghastly, nihilistic experiment.

A NIGHT AT THE ROXBURY (15): Will Ferrell and Chris Kattan, aka the Butabi brothers, are routinely kneed in the groin by girls with big cleavages. Awful nightclub comedy from John Fortenberry.

SOUTHPAW (15): Gripping documentary about Ireland's first traveller boxing champ, Francis Barrett, who graduated from a caravan site to the Atlanta Olympics. Liam McGrath directs.

CURRENT

PATCH ADAMS (12): Robin Williams stars in this absurd medical movie about a doctor who wants to cure the world with laughter. Director Tom Shadyac extracts an obscene amount of sentiment with little anaesthetic.

PLEASANTVILLE (12): Ingenious spoof of American family values. Two dysfunctional 1990s teenagers get sucked into a squeaky-clean 1950s TV soap. Great performances from Tobey Maguire, Jeff Daniels, and Reese Witherspoon.

BELOVED (15): Oprah Winfrey is powerful as a runaway slave haunted by poltergeists, lynch mobs, and a dead daughter. Jonathan Demme's overlong film fails, however, to get inside the festering heart of Toni Morrison's Pulitzer Prize winner.

YOU'VE GOT MAIL (PG): Bullet-proof romantic blockbuster with Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan who fall in love on the Internet. Written and directed by Nora Ephron.

Call me Madam Saigon



MARILYN KINGWILL

Losing their blues in *Chicago*: Alistair Robins, Sophie-Louise Dann and Mark O'Malley in Gerard Alessandrini's tasty parade of musical parodies

CABARET

Forbidden Broadway
Jermyn Street

Gerard Alessandrini's cheekily critical show tried to woo London a few years ago and London paid little attention, probably because the chosen theatre was too big for its needling style, affectionately sharp, something like adoration by a thousand cuts.

The current venue is only five rows deep, making it altogether a better place to enjoy the parade of parodies, which is all the show is. Its targets are exclusively musicals, past, present and even future — *Mamma Mia!* receives a sharp jab and has yet to begin its previews. So some familiarity with the world of musicals is a necessity. That said, few of us can escape knowing that, for instance, one of the characters in *Beauty and the Beast* is a candlestick, or that the lyrics in a Sondheim musical are thorny with internal rhymes.

Nonetheless, enjoyment is obviously enhanced if one has actually sat and mourned the banality of the words in *Miss Saigon*, here exposed as the fatuous trivia they are.

Alessandrini's show, regularly updated, has been running for 17 years, and his usual technique is to twiddle a lyric to make it comment upon a musical's faults, absurdity or characteristic style. Thus Sophie-Louise Dann dons a Ute Lemper blonde wig and, with "Give them the old saucy-Fosse," burlesques the choreography of *Chicago*, hands pawing, bowler hat tipped over the brow, and verses that point the mockery.

The stage is wide but shallow. Paul Knight sits at the piano to one side and all the entrances bar one are made from the other, the exception being the arrival of "Ethel Merman", pushing through the audience and corncraking her exasperation at the frail voices of today. Christine Pedi, graduate of several *Forbidden Broadway* companies, does a full-spirited job with this sacred monster of the American stage, and the number she sings with Alistair Robins demonstrates another of Alessandrini's tricks. There is no logical reason why Robins, with a mike in his *Phantom* wig and radio-controlled through his pants, should sing a song from *Call Me Madam*, but when he bleats "I keep singing, though my voice is air" against Pedi's roar of "We don't need amplifying!" a witty comment on theatrical decadence is being made.

The numbers vary in quality and relevance. Those featuring Carol Channing, Elaine Stritch and Julie Andrews reveal amusing touches but must have been around a long time. The *Les Misérables* jokes surfaced in the last London show but no matter: glum revolutionaries shuffling around on an imaginary revolve still look deliciously absurd, and all lovers of rhyme will relish the pairing of *Les Misérables* with *Hedda Gabler*.

The neatest number is the Sondheim parody *Into The Words* — Pedi as Little Red Riding Hood, Mark O'Malley as Sweeney Todd — and the most ferocious is surely Pedi's skewering of Liza Minnelli in full gabble. London audiences may not have New York's insatiable appetite for morsels of showbiz but there's enough on the menu here to make a tasty enough meal.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Animal magnetism

CONCERTS

Oliver Knussen
Queen Elizabeth Hall

If one were looking for a single link in the chain joining Benjamin Britten and today's prodigy, Thomas Adès, it would have to be Oliver Knussen. The Aldeburgh connection apart, what these three composers have in common is technical virtuosity of the highest order and an immediacy of communication that springs from the brilliance of their handling of materials.

Knussen's double bill of one-act fantasy operas from the Eighties, *Higglety Pigglety Pop!* and *Where the Wild Things Are* (both based on books of Maurice Sendak), demonstrates that accomplishment and communicability at every turn: round every corner lurks a musical inspiration that brings a chuckle or perfectly captures the imaginative world of the child.

Allusions to Britten in these works (an opera within an opera in *Higglety*, the sea interludes in *Wild Things*) are doubtless intentional, though Julian Anderson's probing notes for the concert performances at the QEH on Wednesday night under the composer's own baton traced their ancestry back through Janáček, Ravel and Stravinsky to Mussorgsky and Humperdinck.

Knussen's achievement, like that of the best of his exemplars, is to create a child's fantasy world with adult sophistication but without condescension. Thus the descent to the cellar where the Lion resides in *Higglety* elicits growling trombones, rolling timpani and agitated double basses, while the roaring Lion (Stephen Richardson) is at once fearsome and amusing.

As the Sealyham Terrier, Jennie, at the centre of the story, Cynthia Buchan gained her Faustian experience endearingly, while Lisa Saffer took the stratospheric coloratura soprano roles (Baby, Potted Plant and Mother Goose) with dazzling facility.

David Wilson-Johnson was a splendidly sleazy Pig-in-Sandwich-Boards, as well as the low voice of the Ash Tree. Completing a fine cast were Christopher Gillett as the high voice of the Ash Tree and the Cat-Milkman, with Rosemary Hardy as the parlourmaid and Baby's Mother.

The London Sinfonietta, as directed by Knussen, delivered the score with appropriate virtuosity: wheezy vacuum cleaner, animals' yawns, the whole magical fantasy world all conjured with wit, affection and imagination.

BARRY MILLINGTON

More sauce please

[redacted]

There is more than may immediately meet the eye in Handel's "little opera": how could there not be when the libretto has input from Alexander Pope, John Gay and John Hughes (for whose biography Dr Johnson coined the infamous phrase "exotick and irrational entertainment") — not to mention Ovid?

The genealogy of the amorous giant Polyphemus ranges from Apuleius's Golden Ass through to King Kong: there are some saucy images — and a few eyebrow-raising double entendres — in the text for this tale of the sea-nymph whose grief at the murder of her droopy shepherd lover is somewhat perfunctory, and whose transformation of him into a disembodied stream forever roving through her plains is surely every liberated woman's dream. An innocent little pastoral *Acis* is not.

Not that too much of this came across in Wednesday's slightly "churchy" performance by the City of London Choir and the Hanover Band. The playing was lively: nimble string articulation, oboes quacking away like ducks on the wing (I mean that as a compliment) and sweetly chirruping recorders. But the briskness of Hilary Davan Wetton's conducting was compromised by all-too-predictable ritenutos, fatal pauses between numbers that destroyed any sense of dramatic flow, and a certain "chug-along" approach; repeated notes in Handel need thinking about, and shaping, as indeed does every single phrase he wrote.

The chorus sprang to life with "Behold the monster Polypheme", as what chorus wouldn't, and more or less coped with the conductor's breakneck speed for "Happy we" — does happiness really have to be so frenetic? Mark Wilde, in strong, firm voice, underplayed the droopiness of Acis and indeed sounded as if he really meant what he was singing: would that he had bitten some other members of the cast. Jeni Bern's Galatea, sweet enough of tone, could make much more of the words, and Ivan Sharpe took Damon's role as killjoy rather too literally — there is more to him than that.

You need some divine conflation of Paul Robeson, Bryn Terfel and Hans Hotter not to be upstaged by Polyphemus's choral introduction, which Andrew Mayor has no pretensions to being, his baritone too light and polite for the monster's amorous outpourings. It is always good to hear this lovely piece, but a bit more of the raised eyebrow would be nice next time.

RODNEY MILNES

هكذا من الأصل

■ **POP ALBUMS**
Elton, Tim and Aida

ARTS

■ **POP OPINION**
Heroin dopes

Sound and fury signify nothing

NEW POP ALBUMS: There must be bigger things that anger Skunk Anansie than duff TV, says **David Sinclair**

SKUNK ANANSIE
Post Orgasmic Chill
(Virgin CDV2881 £14.99)

NOT a very inviting title, it must be said, combining the inelegant ring of social-services jargon with a nagging sense of anticlimax. But then the euphonious use of language has never been high on the list of Skunk Anansie's priorities when forging their uncompromising amalgam of heavy metal and black feminist rage.

"I've been there and your frigid wit was far too greasy/ Ain't so slick and it ain't so damn profound," lead singer Skin croaks, just before the guitars go into Gatling-gun mode for the shouty punk chorus of *And This is Nothing that I Thought I Had*.

To give them their due, it sounds as if the band have put considerable effort into their third album, and several numbers, including *Tracy's Flaw* and *Lately*, boast strong melodies and a more reflective tone than much of their previous work. But no matter how thoughtfully they start off, songs such as *Good Things Don't Always Come to You* and *Secretly* sound unnecessarily shrill and bad-tempered by the end. And when Skin starts railing against the viewing options on her hotel television as if this were an issue of urgent popular concern, you get the impression of an artist who is suffering a creeping sense of detachment from any meaningful reality.

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Elton John and Tim Rice's Aida
(Rocket/Mercury 524 651 £14.99)

ELTON JOHN and Tim Rice approach the daunting prospect of rewriting the story of *Aida* in a modern pop idiom with an air of merry presumption. John boasts about composing 21 songs for the score in 21 days, while Rice blithely remarks what "great fun" it was to have such a dramatic narrative at his disposal. The Disney Broadway musical based on their efforts is scheduled to open in spring 2000, after which opera lovers will find themselves having to explain to those outside their circle that Verdi's *Aida* has nothing to do with the John/Rice version, rather than vice versa.

To complicate matters further, this album has little to do with the proposed musical, being instead a vehicle for various star turns including Sting, Tina Turner, the Spice Girls, Boyz II Men, James Taylor and, oddly, Lenny Kravitz, to tackle some of the songs destined for the show in any way they feel inclined.

The result is a collection of predictably humalong tunes, freighted with blustery choruses and much ersatz emotion, with John hanging on to most of the best stuff for himself, including the recent hit, *Written in the Stars* (his duet with LeAnn Rimes).

During the suitably melodramatic death scene depicted in *The Messenger* he and Lulu prepare to meet their end with quivering harmonies and a stoical resolve: "Now the pain is over/Now we lie together/ Gracefully at rest."

Failure, one fears, is not an option.

BLACKSTREET
Finally
(Interscope INTD-90323 £14.99)

APPARENTLY Blackstreet supremo Teddy Riley declined to work on a song with Whitney Houston because she asked him to do "something like *No Diggity*", the number which remains Blackstreet's biggest hit and a key factor in pushing sales of their 1996 album, *Another Level*, past the six million mark.

But if the originator of swingbeat is so keen to avoid repeating past triumphs, it seems odd that *Finally*, Blackstreet's third album, should be bookended by songs based on samples of old Jackson Five hits; *Can You Feel Me/It* and *Take Me There* (built on the well-thumbed riff of *I Want You Back*).

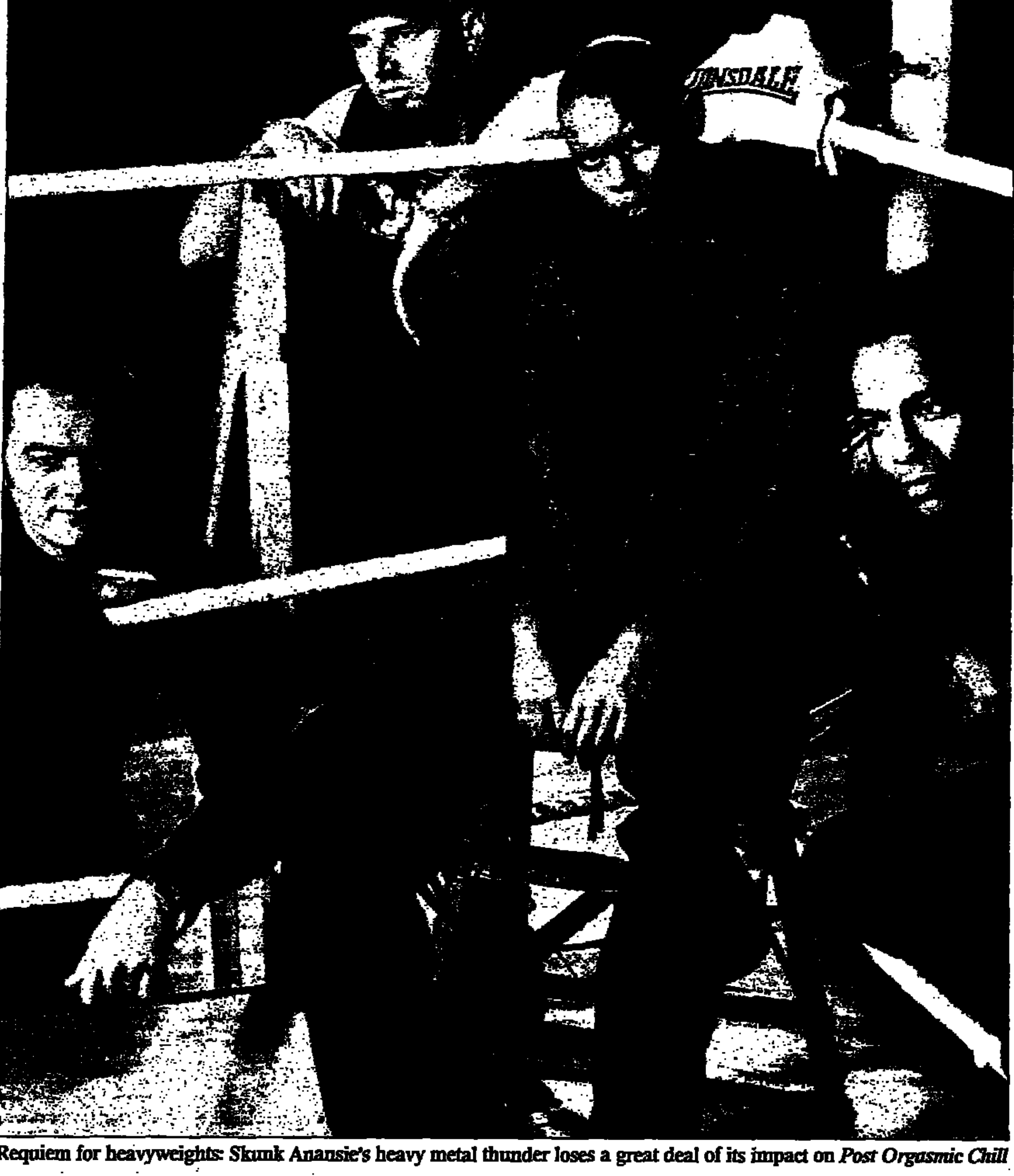
Elsewhere there are plenty of nicely crafted R&B ballads, such as *In a Rush* (featuring a harmonica cameo by Stevie Wonder), and slinky hip hop/ soul grooves including *Girlfriend/Boyfriend* (a mildly sensuous duet between Riley and Janet Jackson). But there is little evidence of the innovation to which Riley says he aspires.

EVIE SANDS
Women In Prison
(Train Wreck/Direct Distribution TW009 £14.99)

HER last album was the appropriately titled *Suspended Animation*, released in 1979. Now Evie Sands is back with an album discreetly guided by her mentor from the 1970s, the co-songwriter, co-producer, guitarist and backing singer Chip Taylor, but brimming with a wise and womanly passion that is hers alone.

Although optimistically compared in the sleeve notes to Dusty Springfield's *Dusty in Memphis*, the album is closer in spirit to the middle-aged blues of Bonnie Raitt or the rootsy birdsong of Eva Cassidy. And, while the arrangements sound a bit middle-of-the-road, every so often there is a flash of something stronger, as when she launches into the bitter tirade of *I Hate You Today* or surrenders to the unashamed yearning of *I Want Your Hands*: "No, that ain't wrong/That's just a woman/ Singing a song/She ain't supposed to sing."

WEBSITES:
Skunk Anansie: skunkanansie.co.uk
Aida: polygram-us.com/aida/
Blackstreet: fanfam.com
TELEVISION:
Top of the Pops: BBC1, tonight, 7.30pm
Hit, Miss or Maybe: BBC2, Monday, 6pm
RADIO:
UK Top 40: Radio 1, Sunday, 4pm


Requiem for heavyweights: Skunk Anansie's heavy metal thunder loses a great deal of its impact on *Post Orgasmic Chill*

TOP TEN ALBUMS

1	(1)	Performance and Cocktails	Stereophonics (V2)
2	(2)	Talk on Corners	Corrs (Atlantic)
3	(-)	13	Blur (Food)
4	(4)	I've Been Expecting You	Robbie Williams (Chrysalis)
5	(3)	The Miseducation of...	Lauryn Hill (Columbia)
6	(8)	My Love is Your Love	Whitney Houston (Arista)
7	(14)	Ladies & Gentlemen — The Best of	George Michael (Epic)
8	(12)	Believe	Cher (WEA)
9	(20)	Baby One More Time	Britney Spears (Jive)
10	(7)	Forgiven, Not Forgotten	Corrs (Atlantic)

Copyright CIN ● *Figure in brackets indicates last week's position*

Sowing seeds of Lebanon

RABIH ABOU-KHALIL
Yara
Enja ENJ-9360 2

THE Lebanese oud player Rabih Abou-Khalil has lived in Munich since the late 1970s, and is now his label's top-selling artist. On this, his tenth album — music for *Yara*, a film by Yilmaz Arslan — he is joined by two Frenchmen, violinist Dominique Pifarely and cellist Vincent Courtois, and Syrian frame drummer Nabil Khaiat, but fiercely resists the label "world music". Indeed, his work is genuinely unclassifiable, *sui generis*, primarily concerned with purely musical matters — the creation of mood, the blending of unusual instrumental sounds to create intriguing textures — rather than extra-musical ones such as selfconscious cross-cultural exchange. Thus majestic, sonorous themes give rise to graceful violin and oud solos; dancing rhythms are propelled by skirling strings; melancholic airs slowly unfold from the gently communing interplay of violin and cello, or oud and frame drum, and the result is an album of startling originality and virtuosic elegance.

NEW JAZZ ALBUMS

BILL BRUFORD'S EARTHWORKS
A Part, and Yet Apart
Discipline Global Mobile DGM 9905

THE sixth album from ex-Yes drummer Bill Bruford's Earthworks features an entirely new personnel and a slight change in musical emphasis. Bruford has always had a keen jazz ear, and Earthworks' previous incarnation showcased the upcoming talents of the 1980s UK scene; this band does the same for those of the late 1990s: gutsy saxophonist Patrick Clahar, sparkling pianist Steve Hamilton, eloquent bassist Mark Hodgson. Bruford still has a penchant for airy yet punchy themes that lend themselves well to his brisk but supple drumming style, but the slightly selfconscious archness of previous albums has been replaced by a more straightforward approach.

CHRIS PARKER

They shoot horse, don't they

Heroin's a mug's game. So why, **Caitlin Moran** wonders, do so many pop stars still play it?

There's no surprise in Brett Anderson from Suede's revelation that he's had problems with heroin; nor Damon Albarn from Blur's confession that the No 1 single *Beetlebum* was about his former girlfriend, Justine Frischmann from Elastica, and the same yucky brown stuff. Anyone who has an opinion about the nature of coolness — and further surmises that it consists of leather jackets, androgynous hair, having a bottom smaller than their lapels and being fabulously cynical about a world that's actually rather lovely — is bound to run into trouble, because they are trying to impress dead people (Jim Morrison, Janis Joplin, Keith Moon), and the dead are famously impassive.

It's beyond predictable that heroin has made inroads into the Britpop gonks — it's part of a tedious, much-trodden cycle that starts with a brilliant poppy album, cocaine, euphoria and success; modulates through difficulties adjusting to fame and exhaustion; and ends with a sprawling double-album, depression and heroin. Pop stars take heroin for all sorts of reasons: it's usually triggered by taking too much cocaine, and wanting to slow down a bit. The fact that some pop stars turn to heroin to achieve this, rather than having a nice hot bath and watching *Countryfile*, is proof of the brain-munching qualities of cocaine.


Damon Albarn has been an observer of the damage heroin causes; Marti Pellow has more first-hand experience

Heroin's great evil is that its trouble is a long time coming. Unlike cocaine, it doesn't erode the ears: artists have little difficulty fitting smack into their art, save for the problem of repeatedly working the word "veins" into the lyrics without arousing suspicion. The list of good heroin albums is as long as, and pretty much consists of, the list of the greatest albums of all time. The list of good cocaine albums, on the other hand, is as long as a midget's widget. Given this, smack isn't really a problem, as far as A&R men are concerned.

Management are also pretty sanguine about a nascent habit. Look it from their point of view: the artist is now quiet and malleable. He can be coerced into doing things he would previously consider beneath his dignity. He's stopped whining about wanting a holiday. He's not putting on weight and his spots have cleared up. He's writing an album that appears "deep" and "meaningful", so hey!, there might even be a crossover thing in prospect.

In fact, from an industry point of view, here are some of the things a pop star could do that would be worse than taking heroin: 1) Fiddle with kids; 2) Get fat; 3) Go mad; 4) Become a Quaker; 5) Start going out with someone very, very ugly; 6) Get head stuck between railings during photoshoot; 7) Break zip on favourite jacket day before world tour starts; 8) Record album about economics; 9) Die.

And, as far as the general public is concerned, junkie pop stars are one of life's small bonuses. Not only can we thrill to the *Schadenfreude*, but we can also haul out the drug thesauruses and spend an enjoyable hour saying "He's smacking horse up" and "Brett Anderson's been slamdancing with Mr Brownstone" in a faintly hysterical way.

No — and this is a fairly obvious point — the only person to suffer adversely when a pop star starts taking heroin is the pop star himself. It's his life that hangs in suspended animation while he drains his bank account; it's his emotions that become immune to anything not chemical; it's his friends and family that recede into the background, to be replaced by fellow ghosts who fear the sun. Given that we all know this, the question remains: why would any pop star take heroin?

What you have to remember is that it's not heroin per se that makes people junkies. It's the holes in people's lives that make them junkies. Once you become famous, you become hermetically sealed from any kind of tribulation and woe: yet, unless one is Buddha-whumpingly enlightened, human beings always unconsciously seek out grief in order to learn from it, and evolve. Also, as a songwriter, it's your job to articulate pain and joy and normal life, yet you've been carefully removed from your source. Heroin gives you almost instant trouble, and the kind of faux gravitas the insecure nouveau famous crave.

Given this psychological profile, it was almost inevitable that Marti Pellow from Wet Wet Wet was admitted to hospital after overdosing last week. He's always been desperate to be admired by the cool bands, yet was always dismissed as an MOR chipmunk with too much time and hair-gel on his hands. Still, I have to confess, I didn't see that one coming.

Lisa Verrico enters the hectic life of Craig Armstrong, composer to the stars

Low-key and ubiquitous

Craig Armstrong must be Britain's busiest musician. Since winning Bafta and Ivor Novello awards last year for his soundtrack to Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet*, the Glaswegian composer has been inundated with work. Right now, he is halfway through scoring director Michael Mann's latest big-budget movie, is completing a classical piece for Clio Gould, leader of the London Sinfonietta, and writing songs for his second pop album for Melankolic, Massive Attack's label. In addition, Armstrong was recently in Dublin to produce U2's forthcoming single collaboration with Salman Rushdie and has signed a deal with Michael Nyman's label to release his own classical albums.

"But I'm very choosy about the jobs I take on," insists the affable 39-year-old. "I used to accept every offer. Now, no matter how famous a director is, if I don't like a film, I turn down the work."


Rare sight: Craig Armstrong takes a break from working

Media-shy and seemingly ego-free, Armstrong is unlikely to become a household name. Nevertheless, his music is already familiar to millions through his work on *Goldeneye*, *Batman Forever* and *Mission Impossible*.

At the end of this month, Armstrong is back in British cinemas, courtesy of Ridley Scott's director son, Jake. Having fallen for the composer's debut solo album, *The Space Between Us*, young Scott asked Armstrong to write the score for *Plunkett & Macleane*, which stars Robert Carlyle. Set in the late 18th century, *Plunkett & Macleane* is a humorous highwayman costume caper. But, rather than writing ersatz period tunes, Armstrong chose throbbing techno and trip hop to score scenes such as a ball. "It is a bizarre mix," Armstrong admits. "It's a trick I've been using for years though. If actors are in period costume, contemporary music sounds striking."

Despite graduating from the Royal Academy of Music with a clutch of awards, including Young Jazz Musician of the Year, it was years before Armstrong found work in his favoured field. "I thought I would walk out of the Royal Academy and become a composer, but nobody took me seriously," he says. "I would go into the jazz clubs and say I was the Young Jazz Musician of the Year and they'd say: 'So what? We've got Stan Getz on this evening'."

In time, he returned to Glasgow — and began a brief stint as a pop star. He was a founder member of Texas and cowrote the group's first big hit, *I Don't Want a Lover*. "But I was too romantic to be in a band," he says. "After Texas, I left pop. I was 27 and I felt too old. I wanted to act like an adult. I wanted to work with dance companies."

His big break came through meeting producer Nellee Hooper, who introduced Armstrong to both Massive Attack and Madonna, and would later collaborate with him on *Goldeneye* and *Romeo + Juliet*. And the rest is pop history.

● *The* Plunkett & Macleane *soundtrack is released on March 29 by Virgin*

Hip hoaxers from the beat generation

Duping of the media is not new. Forty years on, **Mike Mosson** relates how he fooled The Guardian

So the BBC and Channel 4 have been exposed presenting actors and hoaxers on talk shows and documentaries. What's new? Forty years ago I was a chemistry student in Manchester. Maurice Hatton, a photography student, and I edited the college's fortnightly magazine — jazz, poetry readings, hints of drugs and sexual freedom.

In a fill-in piece on beatniks we let our imaginations run loose — with our only knowledge coming from reading about the Beat Generation in California. We thought little more about it, being rightly proud of the cover photograph of Lowry at work in his studio and our interview with him.

Within days *The (Manchester) Guardian* was on the phone. Beatniks in Manchester! Could we take a feature writer and a photographer to a beatnik party? Maurice and I had just finished our finals. We had nothing else to do and the opportunity was too good to miss. If *The Guardian* wanted to visit a beatnik party it should surely be able to do so.

Maurice had a friend with a photographic studio on Manchester's Oxford Street. Its attic would make an appropriate venue.

BEATNIKS JUST DOING THEIR BEST

Ginsberg's candle-lit apostles

Scoop: The Guardian of June 16, 1959

The next two days were spent recruiting and briefing fellow students — men with beards (then uncommon), girls with long hair, musicians, and others who would behave strangely. We arranged to meet *The Guardian* duo — Michael Frayn, then a feature writer, and a staff photographer — near to the site of "The Beatnik Party".

When we arrived the party was in full swing and the representatives of the press duly mingled, talking to and photographing participants, who played their parts to the full — expressing radical philosophies of life and overt sexual attentions, regardless of gender. There was home-played modern jazz, some dubious smoke, and I read Allen Ginsberg's *Howl* to a guitar accompaniment.

The following week *The Guardian* published a description of Frayn's encounter with Manchester's beatniks. Mission accomplished! That autumn, when the academic year had resumed, one of the long-haired girls who had played her part for *The Guardian*, was in a coffee bar. An older women took the next seat and said: "I work for the BBC. Do you know any beatniks?" My collaborator replied that she had been at the party written up in *The Guardian*. The researcher's excitement was unrestrained as she wanted to know how to contact the organisers.

Once again the temptation was too great to resist. We met the researcher and the BBC producer in the grottiest pub we knew. They worked for a TV book review programme presented by Brian Redhead, then features editor of *The Guardian* and later anchor of BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme. Nancy Spain, a tabloid columnist, was to review Jack Kerouac's second book. His best seller, *On the Road*, had been the first popular novel of the Beat Generation. The BBC wanted to incorporate interviews with beatniks into Nancy's review of his sequel.

So the following Sunday we found ourselves in BBC TV's Manchester studio. It took more than eight hours to produce a half-hour programme. Presenter, reviewer and production staff dashed off to the local between takes to steady their nerves. Maurice and I became more and more extreme in our proclaimed philosophies as we were repeatedly introduced to the camera. We went on and on, setting out to upset a middle-class audience.

Our rewards? An hour in the hospitality room with unlimited whisky and sandwiches and, three months later, a cheque for £12; and some understanding of the fear of audience indifference that can drive the professional TV performer to drink, deception and self-destruction. We also acquired a profound scepticism about anything presented by the media as reality.

There were two family reactions to my TV performance. From my mother a telegram: "You are desperately ill. Come home at once." From my then future mother-in-law: "You can't marry him!"

● *Mike Mosson retired in 1997 as director of human resources for the Royal Bank of Scotland. Maurice Hatton, who died last year, was a photographer and film-maker.*



Phil Redmond tells Carol Midgley: "We are not stopping the sex and sensationalism storylines but we need to involve characters the audience can relate to"

Creator meets fanatic

The faltering Liverpool soap *Brookside* is going back to basics. Phil Redmond tells **Carol Midgley** why

These have been testing times for the true *Brookside* fanatic. Those of us who fell head over heels for Bobby and Sheila Grant and George and Marie Jackson in the Eighties and have built our week around Channel 4's three half-hourly episodes ever since, have found recent events little short of traumatic.

Storylines in the Liverpool soap opera, which once put bodies under patios and Roman Catholic priests in bed with young women, had started to meander and become, well, *boring*. Characters whom you thought you had known for years suddenly appeared to change personality overnight. Worse, government propaganda started seeping into the dialogue more obviously; *Brookside* junkies tuning in for a fix of sensationalism began to hear dialogue about the Ofsted report and adult literacy courses.

Last year, as ratings started to slide, came the alarming rumours that Channel 4 was about to axe *Brookside*, its flagship programme. The crisis reached its pinnacle last weekend when it was reported that Phil Redmond, the soap's creator and head of Mersey Television, was bowing out as producer declaring himself, at 49, "too old" for the job.

So it is a slightly world-weary Redmond who turns up at the Langham Hilton hotel in London to explain what is going on. Is he really abandoning the baby that he has nurtured since birth 17 years ago?

"It is rubbish, complete rubbish," he says. "I have never been the series producer. I just get involved with the scripts when there is something big going on like the body under the patio story.

"I have brought two new families into the Close, so I have been more involved than usual but now they are established I am stepping back again. That's all."

Redmond hopes the arrival of the Musgroves and the Shadwicks, both classic working-class families with a tendency to shout at each other, will help to restore *Brookside*'s traditional values. Rather than relying on gas explosions or mystery viruses to pull in viewers, the drama will come from the characters, which, *Brookside* fans hope, will take it back to the glory days when Billy and Doreen would regularly scream the house down.

Redmond says he realised the show needed resuscitating at the end of 1997 when he saw a spectacularly dull scene. "Ron Dixon and (David) Bing Crosby were arguing about Ron putting some petrol in his car, which went on for about seven minutes. I refer to it as the time we lost the plot. I decided that there was going to be an instant pyrotechnic, so we could start again. We had the gas explosion and that's how the Shadwicks came in."

The Shadwicks: vocal

Redmond has also been quoted as saying that there were too many middle-class families in *Brookside* and that working-class drama was more interesting than middle-class drama which could not "hold a large audience".

"I never said that the middle classes were boring. I said that a successful series has to have the same range of demographics as the audience and the middle class only make up 30 per cent of the population. We are going back to basics. We are not stopping the sex and sensationalism storylines but we need to involve characters the audience can relate to — families that worry about how to pay the mortgage."

At an average audience of 3.3 million, *Brookside*'s ratings are below par. But they are not, insists Redmond, as bad as has been claimed. During the trial of Mandy and Beth Jordache, which was the show's peak, the audience for an average episode was 3.8 million.

Redmond believes that the ratings problem is less to do with storylines and more to do with shows on rival channels being particularly strong. He also says Channel 4 has failed to promote the show properly.

"There has been virtually no promotional publicity for *Brookside*, it's all been about *Sex and the City* and American imports. Our big impact was supposed to be last November with the arrival of the Musgroves but the marketing got screwed up. Channel 4 promoted Lindsay's wedding to Peter instead, but Peter's character was leaving. So we didn't get the impact."

Does Channel 4's chief executive, Michael Jackson, know how Redmond feels? "Let's just say he's aware of the situation. But there is always a year of uncertainty when a new chief executive comes in."

The fact that *Brookside* has a tiny budget and far fewer scriptwriters than *EastEnders* or *Coronation Street* is legendary. Extras rarely have a speaking part and you will never hear copyrighted pop music or see television programmes in any *Brookside* bars or houses because Mersey cannot afford the fees.

But lack of money cannot account for storylines that have driven fans to distraction. For example, to write out Max Farnham, the scriptwriters suddenly decided that he had been having an affair for 20 years — something that had never been mentioned before.

"Sometimes we get it wrong and Max was one thing I will put my hand up to. We had to come up with something of such enormity that Suzannah (his wife) would not contemplate having him back."

Redmond is adamant that *contemporary issues do have a* place. "These are things that affect people's lives. We are going to have Margi Shadwick being asked to join a European task force."

Redmond is also introducing "flexecutives". "Flexis are what we would have called yuppies in the Eighties but they are scruffier, and whereas yuppies would have been lawyers and accountants, flexis have jobs in the media.

"By the end of 1997 we didn't have one traditionally functional family, but *now I think* we have set things up to be really interesting."

ITV plays a blinder

One week does not make a strategy, but ITV is cock-a-hoop over the performance of its new schedule uninterrupted by the bongs of *News at Ten*. It is now clear why ITV put so much effort into persuading the Independent Television Commission to permit the change. Helped by stockpiled movie premieres such as *Goldeneye* and *The Specialist*, ITV raced to a 47.2 per cent share of peak-time viewing, leaving BBC 1 trailing with 37.3 per cent. It is the best ITV performance for four years and will give Richard Eyre, ITV's chief executive, a good chance of achieving the near impossible — increasing ITV's peak-time audience share by one percentage point this year to 39 per cent.

Reversing the downward trend from 44.3 per cent in 1994 as more and more channels have come on stream will be a big achievement. It will be even more demanding to repeat the trick in 2000 and take the share up to the self-imposed target of 40 per cent. The signs from Wednesday's launch of its spring and summer schedule — with a strong selection of popular domestic drama ranging from Trevor Eve in Andrea Newman's new psychological thriller, *Evil Streak*, to *Rhinoceros*, a romantic comedy starring Robson Green — do not appear good for the BBC. On the real-life side *Birth Race 2000* — providing a little help for couples who want to give birth to a millennium baby — contrasts with a 20-part series from Melvyn Bragg on 20 centuries of Christianity.

The overall impression created is that the BBC could be on the back foot for some time and will have plenty of opportunities to polish its traditional fall-back argument that it is not in the business of chasing ratings. And ITV saves its best programmes for the autumn, the peak advertising season. In the past there have been cycles of programming success, times when the BBC has been firing on all cylinders. Despite the ever-increasing competition, BBC 1 increased its audience share in 1995 and 1996. But since then ITV has fought back. We are now seeing the effects of a resurgent ITV combining with the newly liberated schedule. It could be a long time before the BBC is a serious contender — its spring and summer schedules to be revealed on Monday had better be good.

The ratings pressure could not come at



Raymond Snoddy

a worse time for the BBC. The Davies Committee is looking into ways of increasing its income and at what opportunities there are for greater savings from the revenues it has got. Financial pressure will increase as the licence fee rises by less than the cost of inflation. Inevitably there will also be a period of instability as all the top BBC management start answering the advertisements that appeared this week for a new director-general.

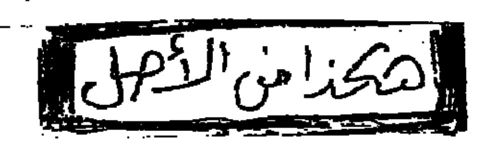
The improvement in the fortunes of ITV could not be coming at a better time for Richard Eyre, who very much wants to be the next director-general of the BBC. Poaching him might be a neat way of at least causing ITV to falter in its tracks. It is inconceivable that Eyre will not be on the shortlist for the job that many broadcasters find endlessly desirable — despite all the drawbacks.

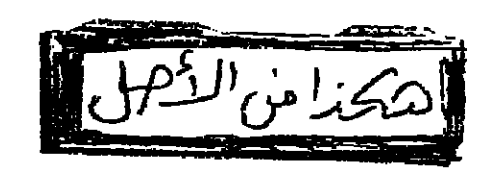
■ THE rationale behind Lord Rothermere's decision to launch the *Metro* free newspaper on the London Underground this week is clear. In part it is an opportunity to develop a new business, but it also looks like a measure to stop any other paper from attacking the soft underbelly of the *Evening Standard* by launching a free newspaper of its own.

News International, the owner of *The Times*, has been looking at just such a free paper to try to win some of the *Standard*'s classified advertising market. The project has, in effect, been put on hold to see how *Metro* pans out. It is still a courageous plan to hand out a respectable, if basic, free newspaper at every Tube station when you are in the business of selling the *Daily Mail* and *Evening Standard* to the same people.

There is the anecdotal evidence of the overenthusiastic *Metro* distributor who got too close to a newsagent and cut sales of the *Mail* by 20 per cent. It will be a very skilful highwire act indeed if Associated can produce a free newspaper that is good enough to be a success without cannibalising the readership of its main titles. Tuesday's issue, for example, had a full report of the Spurs versus Barnsley FA Cup game and carried an advertisement for the *Evening Standard* promising a full report of the match.

But full marks to the young Lord Rothermere for having the courage to test an interesting theory — that in a clogged London, the way to reach new readers is to use the public transport system.





The party's not yet over for Noel

Noel Edmonds is relieved that the House Party has been axed. He is now planning bigger things for Saturday night TV, says Meg Carter

Tomorrow night will be a mixed blessing for Noel Edmonds. It marks the end of an era with the last edition of *Noel's House Party* on BBC1. And a beginning, too, as Edmonds pursues a range of other ideas under Magic, a new strategic alliance with the former BBC head of light entertainment, Michael Leggo, and Michael Hurll, the executive producer of *Blind Date*.

Noel's House Party was once described by the former BBC1 Controller Alan Yentob as "the most important show on the BBC". Since then its ratings have slumped from 15 million to six million. Responding to the announcement that the show must end, Edmonds insisted that the decision was "mutual", adding: "I feel as though a huge weight has been lifted off my shoulders."

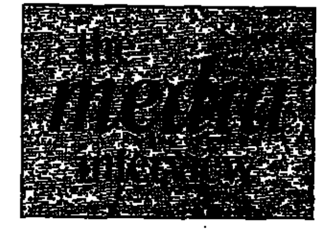
He identifies parallels between the fluctuating fortunes of *House Party* and the BBC throughout the eight-year run.

"*House Party* is one of the most accurate mirrors for what's been happening at the BBC in recent years," he says. "The programme changed a lot, as did the BBC. Both suffered from enormous cost-cutting, which brought into focus weaknesses on the production side. A lot of talent left to launch their own companies and, after the fifth year, the cuts really began to hurt."

Contrary to popular opinion, while Edmonds owns the *House Party* format — including the Crinkley Bottom name and features such as the Gunge Tank and Grab A Grand — the show has always been made by the BBC in-house. In a well-documented spat during the last series, one show was cancelled after Edmonds walked out in protest at production standards.

Edmonds sees other parallels between the demise of his show and the state of the BBC. Both have been affected by changes in society and a shift in attitudes to — and within — television. "Take the explosion of the leisure industry," he says. "Leisure has become a major consideration in terms of time and money. Television has become merely a part of this. It isn't 'special' any more."

At the same time broadcasters have found themselves losing control. "They may want to perpetuate the myth that they are the power base but they are not. Bill Gates could probably buy Rupert Murdoch with the change in his back pocket. We will soon see a massive



shift in power. Already the conventional view of television is flying out of the window."

Edmonds enjoys an informed perspective on British television: he has spent more than two decades as the face of Saturday television on BBC1. But his television prankster persona belies his off-air role as businessman and millionaire. Unique Group, which Edmonds owns outright, makes programmes for commercial and non-commercial television and radio stations, and last year turned over £15 million, a figure projected to rise to £20 million in 1999.

Its activities span television production, talent management, live events — Unique recently renewed its contract to produce *Proms in the Park* for BBC television — video conferencing and a division developing "new applications for proven broadcast technology".

"We want to cater for the broadcast industry's changing demands and needs," he says. "Once, the only thing anyone was interested in was who was going to host a new television show. Then it was all about formats. Now it's who's going to produce it. With budgets down, the true skill lies in resource management."

Magic, the alliance between Edmonds, Leggo and Hurll, is intended to take each into new production genres. Edmonds talks enthusiastically about corporate television networks and the Internet. A recently launched operation installs video-meetings networks, technology that can be adapted for broadcast use, or for original material accessible via the Net. Given Edmonds's track record, it is likely to be a shrewd investment.

He is not, however, planning to turn his back on broadcast television. He has recently completed *The World of the Secret Camera* for BBC1. Meanwhile, Unique is working on four pilots for the BBC and developing three television event show formats for ITV. Then there is Magic's involvement in at least four new series and the brief to come up with a new Saturday-night entertainment format for BBC1. "A massive challenge," he admits.

Edmonds's style of light entertainment is tried and tested and, given the right format, broadcasters seem confident that it can still generate ratings. Weary of the fad for "docusoaps", Edmonds predicts a viewing backlash as audiences clamour for popular entertainment. "One of the most important roles today is creating TV events," he says. "There has been a decline in programmes that are exciting and involving." *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* is an exception. "It works the way *House Party* used to — live, with viewer interaction and fresh ideas."

The challenge is to make programmes that people feel they must watch. Success can come only from building brands — programmes and "stars". "But it's all fireworks now. Too much quick burn," he says. And deregulation of radio has been a factor. "Once radio was the traditional breeding ground for new talent. Now we have an industry unwilling to take risks. Where would Kenny Everett start out today?"

Few traditional television companies, including the BBC, are willing to nurture new talent or to build loyalty. He points to Carol Vorderman, currently fronting three shows on three different channels — hardly a recipe for developing a broadcaster's television brand, he observes.

Point taken. Until, that is, he lets slip that he has yet to decide whether he'd have "more fun" working with "other people" when his BBC contract runs out in March 2000.

"Radio 2 is the UK's most successful radio station because of its talent line-up," he adds. "BBC TV should listen. And learn."

PAUL ROGERS



"People are weary of docusoaps," Noel Edmonds says. He predicts a backlash as viewers clamour for popular entertainment

Writ over credits

A row over the credits, bordering on alleged "copyright theft" by Survival Anglia, the wildlife programming arm of United News and Media, is becoming a *cause célèbre* on behalf of independent producers. Survival Anglia, a sister company of Anglia Television, on Wednesday said it would contest a writ from Australia's Prospero Productions, claiming copyright theft and seeking damages of at least £500,000.

The row concerns a six-part series made by Prospero, *Hutan, Wildlife of the Malaysian Rainforest*. The names of Prospero and its directors were removed from the credits when the series was retitled *Malaysian Jungle* and aired by Channel 5 last month. The series was billed as a "Catspaw presentation for Channel 5" and the names of Catspaw's production team were given as Simon Ellis, Roy Hunt, Joanna Mintly, Andrea Olsen, Petra Regent and Peter Scholfield.

Prospero says Catspaw had nothing to do with the making of the Malaysian series, though it is involved in packaging programmes for Channel 5's wildlife strand. Apart from the producers and cinematographers, no other members of the Prospero production team were mentioned.

Ed Punchard, a director of Prospero and a producer on the Malaysian series who was credited on screen, says he had to make a stand because the company's lifeblood was its intellectual property: "By seeking to take credit for our work, Survival Anglia is damaging our reputation and depriving us of future commissions."

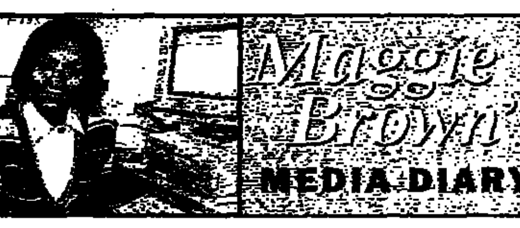
Peter du Cane, the supervising director for the series and director of the first two programmes, is even more upset. Copies of the credits show that he was not mentioned when the first four programmes were aired. When the problem was pointed out to Channel 5 the fifth was withdrawn and the credits corrected for the final one. Prospero has no complaint with Channel 5. In a letter to Survival Anglia, du Cane described making the series, shot in the rainforest. "It was hot and humid, there were mosquitoes and leeches. Now I discover that the series has been broadcast ... without any credit for myself."

Survival Anglia's lawyers say the "series production team" credit is standard in Britain and referred to the entire Channel 5 wildlife series; it never meant to suggest that those credited produced the work. Survival adds that it had the right to make changes under the contract — drawn up with Primetime, the programming distributors — which says changes or deletions can be made to credits to conform to Channel 5's policy "providing producer and director credits remain".

United News and Media yesterday said it had received no formal statement of claim from Prospero and that Primetime had cleared the credits.

RAYMOND SNODDY

A share in sport's TV millions



WHILE BSkyB's proposed takeover of Manchester United, and the Premier League's turmoil grab headlines, behind the scenes the Government is determined to force through a fairer system to recycle the huge sums raised by the sale of rights to TV.

"Let's face it, sport is just a sub-division of TV these days," says a key adviser. Ministers want the multimillion-pound bonanza distributed throughout football, cricket, rugby, and tennis instead of bolstering ahandful of clubs and the lifestyles of overpaid stars.

Chris Smith's Department of Culture, Media and Sports is uncomfortable at watching freemarket forces wreak damage on an American scale. It wants to link "delisted" sports events (ie, those that can be auctioned off for subscription or even a pay-per-view) with a cast-iron method of cash redistribution. Advisers are working on a strategic plan.

■ A NEW Editor for the *Financial Times*? That's the chatter at the paper where the incumbent Richard Lambert is close to clocking up ten years, traditionally regarded as the correct length of tenure at the pink helm. The successor? Australian-born Robert Thompson is in the frame. Currently editing the American edition, he is in charge of the big push to hit 100,000 sales by the end of the year, ordained by (owner) Pearson's Marjorie Scardino. Andrew Gowers, who deputised for Lambert, is in Germany, preparing the new German-language *Deutsche FT* with partners Bertelsmann for launch this autumn. So determinedly international is the *FT*'s stance — foreign sales outstripped UK ones last August — that the Budget, for the first time, didn't make the front pages of the international editions last week.

■ THERE has been a battle behind the scenes over the title *Jailbirds*. The BBC got there first this week with Chris Terrill's docusoap about life in a new Yorkshire women's prison. Brian Park, the former *Coronation Street* producer, is making a drama series by that name for ITV starting on May 17 ... except that it is being renamed *Bad Girls* (*Muffs in Cuffs* was rejected).

■ FIVE new media stalwarts, two men, three women, are being recruited to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. They are: Donald Trelford, former Editor of *The Observer*; Charles Wilson, former Editor of *The Times* and Mirror Group director; Joyce Hopkirk, former magazine editor; Linda Christmas, former *Guardian* woman's editor and journalism lecturer; and Eve Pollard, former *Sunday Express* Editor.

The interesting thing is that the key body sounded out for the recommendations was Women in Journalism, the networking group founded by Pollard four years ago which has so rocketed in influence that male editors regularly beg to attend its parties.

■ IF YOU treasure a pet-free existence, here's a tip: don't switch on ITV over the May Bank Holiday (May 1 to 3). That's when the network devotes three days to *Pets in Need*, a live telethon, to find homes for Britain's 20,000 stray dogs and cats. Who thought up this fluffy ruse? Why Pearson Television ... headed by Greg Dyke, tipped by some to become the next BBC Director-General.

NATIONAL SALES — FEBRUARY 1999

	Average daily sale	Compared to Jan '99	Compared to Feb '98	% +/—	Market share
DAILY TITLES					
TABLOID					
The Sun	3,698,805	-23,611	-18,094	-0.49	27.27
Daily Mirror	2,301,499	12,126	-23,864	-1.03	16.97
Daily Express	1,091,790	-12,023	-103,976	-8.70	8.05
Daily Mail	2,346,502	3,808	48,090	2.09	17.30
Daily Star	534,704	-5,287	-50,736	-8.67	3.94
Daily Star (Irish)	90,910	837	3,373	3.85	0.67
Daily Record	700,497	20,191	16,173	2.38	5.16
TABLOID TOTAL	10,764,707	-3,959	-129,036	-1.18	79.36
BROADSHEET					
The Times	755,359	9,042	-55,883	-6.89	5.57
D Telegraph	1,043,653	3,513	-27,042	-2.53	7.69
Guardian	400,600	1,448	-4,151	-1.03	2.95
Independent	220,203	654	3,715	1.72	1.62
Fin Times	380,581	-4,098	27,033	7.65	2.81
B'SHEET TOTAL	2,800,396	10,559	-56,328	-1.97	20.64
GRAND TOTAL	13,565,103	6,600	-185,364	-1.35	100
SUNDAY TITLES					
TABLOID					
NoW	4,296,654	-17,698	-246,803	-5.43	29.94
The People	1,662,080	-72,514	-68,879	-3.98	11.58
Sunday Mirror	1,985,075	-63,827	-144,197	-6.77	13.83
Sunday Express	1,010,122	439	-100,174	-9.02	7.04
Mail on Sunday	2,326,195	34,948	94,908	4.25	16.21
TABLOID TOTAL	11,497,794	-121,897	-519,049	-4.32	80.12
BROADSHEET					
Sunday Times	1,377,297	5,428	4,245	0.31	9.60
Observer	406,937	-12,939	-11,690	-2.79	2.84
Sun Telegraph	816,978	6,391	-24,075	-2.86	5.69
Ind on Sunday	252,105	-482	4,369	1.76	1.76
B'SHEET TOTAL	2,853,317	-1,602	-27,151	-0.94	19.88
GRAND TOTAL	14,351,111	-123,498	-546,200	-3.67	100

Source: ABC

Secret of sales success

As they scanned sales records for the first two months of 1999, only six of the 19 editors of national newspapers could celebrate increases over February 1998, although several, including *The Times*, recorded sales increases in the past two months.

Seeking reasons for success, they may have been tempted to follow the example of Tony Blair and utter mantras: investment, investment, investment. News, news, news. Value for money, value for money, value for money. The papers that are succeeding are getting or offering all three.

The most notable examples are the *Daily Mail* and *The Mail on Sunday* under the direction of Editor-in-Chief Paul Dacre, the first Editor-in-Chief in my recollection who really is a hands-on Editor-in-Chief, especially now his former deputy Peter Wright edits the Sunday paper.

Their success is not surprising. Both have millions to spend on editorial. Neither willingly accepts failure. Each demands 12 to 14-hour working days from their staff. Their marketing departments spend millions advertising the titles on television — almost £19 million last year.

That willingness to invest has been shown over the past two weeks in a revamp of *The Mail on Sunday*. It now hits the doorstep with five chunky sections and increasingly apes *The Sunday Times* agenda, especially with a new *Review* section which is heavy on text and big on star names. Sales have now risen year-on-year for 22 consecutive months. Investment, whether in hiring more journalists or launching new sections, is also telling at *The Independent*, where Simon Kelner became Editor-in-Chief, with Kim Fletcher as Editor of the Sunday title, last May. Sales of both papers are now up year-on-year for the first time in three years.

Year-on-year sales of the three red-top Sundays are down by nearly 500,000. Are they offering value for money is the question some of their editors ask themselves. On my count *The Mail on Sunday* had 364 pages last week, against 394 for *The Sunday Times* (also up year-on-year).

It is regional newspapers that have the biggest success story to tell. Sales for the last half of 1998 show that 70 per cent of the weeklies, half the morning papers and 35 per cent of the evenings recorded year-on-year sales increases.

One of those mornings is the *Western Daily Press*, edited by Ian Beales and selling 60,000 a day. Adding value has been the Bristol philosophy: it has introduced a 48-page Saturday colour magazine, a 20-page Monday sports section and daily supplements. Saturday sales are up by 8 per cent.

Local news, high story counts, editionising made easier by new technology, home delivery — 40 per cent of Northcliffe's newspapers are delivered direct — are some reasons for the renaissance in the regions. Yet again, investment, news, value for money.

BRIAN MACARTHUR

REGIONAL SALES

TITLE	Jul — Dec 1998	% +/—
TOP SELLING UK REGIONAL PAID WEEKLIES		
West Briton	50,603	0.4
Essex Chronicle	49,683	0.2
Surrey Advertiser	45,492	0.2
Kent Messenger	45,383	5.3
Chester Chronicle	44,322	-1.0
TOP SELLING UK REGIONAL MORNINGS		
Aberdeen - Press & Journal	104,548	-0.6
Dundee Courier & Advertiser	101,079	-1.6
Dundee Courier & Advertiser	95,508	-2.3
Norwich - Eastern Daily Press	78,647	0.2
Leeds - Yorkshire Post	75,838	0
TOP SELLING UK REGIONAL EVENINGS		
Birmingham Evening Mail (Mon-Fri)	187,598	-2.4
West Midlands Express & Star (Mon-Fri)	186,969	-2.6
Manchester Evening News (Mon-Fri)	173,446	0.1
Liverpool Echo (Mon-Fri)	157,999	-1.1
Belfast Telegraph	124,530	-3.6

media times

The man who can make deals

Rob Dickins, former chairman of Warner, is setting up a new label under Sony. **Chris Ayres** reports

When The Corrs received their gong for Best International Group at last month's Brit Awards, they thanked a man unknown to most outside the music industry: Rob Dickins. Their appreciation was understandable. Dickins was responsible for signing the band to Warner Music in the UK — the company of which he was chairman until December last year — and giving its traditional sound a more contemporary edge. The formula worked: the band's latest album has sold more than 2.5 million copies.

Dickins, 48, was also responsible for relaunching Cher's career last year. He put together verses and choruses from several different songwriters to create *Believe*, a song that made her one of 1998's biggest-selling artists.

Rob Dickins: new Sony deal

But while The Corrs and Cher thrived, Dickins's career suffered and last year, after 14 years as chairman of Warner, his bosses in the US decided not to renew his contract. Dickins found himself having to look for a new job while artists he developed stormed the charts. However, Dickins got his own back this week by announcing a new venture that will put him in direct competition with Warner — a record label called Instant Karma, funded by Sony Music. The label will be jointly owned by Dickins and Sony. The deal comes amid widespread management turmoil in the music industry. The $10.4 billion merger of PolyGram and Universal has seen many executives either promoted or sacked. Last week EMI shocked the industry by making Eric Nicoli, the former head of United Biscuits, its new chief executive.

Dickins's deal, meanwhile, is thought to be the first of its kind. After all, Sony's usual strategy is to buy stakes in trendy independent record labels, such as Skint (home to Fatboy Slim), and Creation (home to Oasis). The Instant Karma deal turns this strategy on its head.

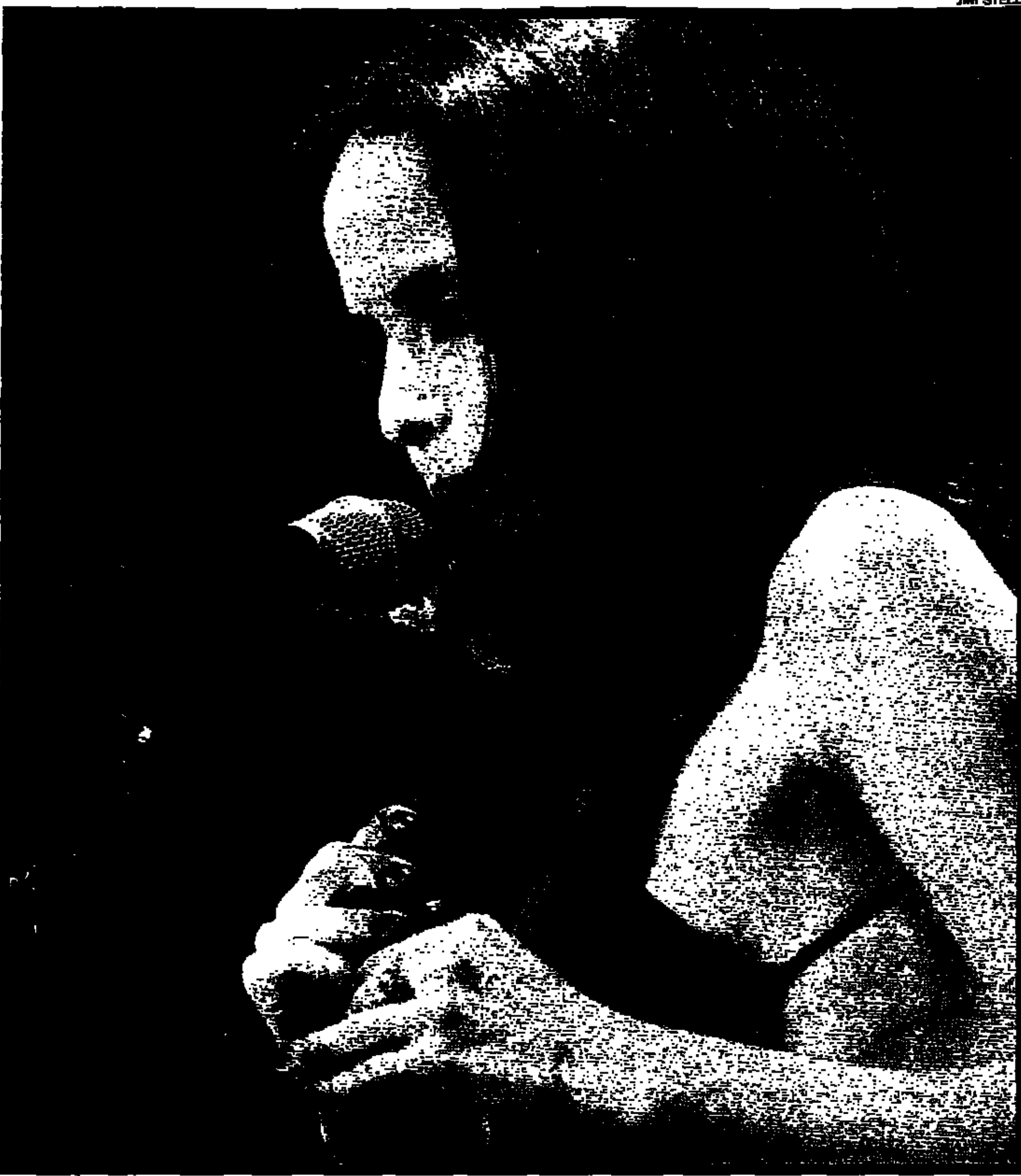
It is understood that Dickins — who is also chairman of the music industry's trade body, the British Phonographic Industry, and who sits on the Government's music industry forum with Simply Red's Mick Hucknall — turned down a more lucrative label deal finally offered by Warner. This is hardly surprising. His departure from Warner (where he was paid an estimated £1.1 million a year) came after rows with his US bosses.

The bad feeling began in 1994 when the company offered Dickins the job of running Warner Bros Records in the US, only to withdraw the offer the next day. He says: "I had a choice between a deal with Warner and a deal with Sony. But if I'd taken the Warner deal it would have put me back into the place I'd been for the past 28 years."

Dickins refuses to disclose financial details of his deal with Sony, but it is thought to involve the company investing tens of millions of pounds in Instant Karma. The label will be launched next month.

Instant Karma will initially employ about ten staff, with sales and manufacturing being handled by Sony. Distribution of the label's CDs will be through The Entertainment Network, and a separate company will be set up to control publishing. Although Dickins says he is "in discussions" with several artists, it is not yet clear what musical direction the label will take. Dickins is keen to dampen speculation that he will poach his favourite artists from Warner Music. Despite Dickins's acerbic sense of humour, his success in the music industry has been attributed largely to his ability to get on with pop stars — even difficult ones.

"It is not the intention to take artists away from other labels," he says. "If they want to come, we would welcome them but most have contracts they cannot get out of." Instant Karma's focus, he says, will be "somewhere between Kate Bush and The Four Tops". He adds, dryly: "I won't be putting a boy band together."


JIM STEELE

Caroline Corr of The Corrs in concert at Wembley. Rob Dickins signed the hit band while at Warners

Get set to greet Hello! TV

A TELEVISED version of *Hello!* magazine may be on our screens shortly, says **Marketing Week**. The publishers have made a pilot for a programme based on its interviews with celebrities at their homes and have submitted it to ITV, either as a one-off programme or a series. *Hello!* suffered an 11 per cent fall in circulation last year and its lead over rival *OK!* is narrowing. A TV show could be a valuable weapon in the circulation battle.

■ THE Direct Marketing Association is split by what **Marketing** calls "the most damaging row in its seven-year history", sparked by its invitation to Mark Bowler, director of media and home shopping for the Royal Mail, to join its board. Some DMA members think Bowler should step down on ground of conflict of interest because the association is negotiating with the Royal Mail over postage rates and commissions. Defenders say that he leaves the room when the board discusses Royal Mail issues.

TRADE

■ *THE MIRROR* is engaged on a "secret Project X" to boost its sales in the regions, according to the **Press Gazette**. Six journalists, who had been working on the company's abortive *Sporting Life* relaunch, have been assigned to produce regionalised editions of *The Mirror*, which may be accompanied by price cuts. "The project is so secret that those chosen will not know what they are working on until it happens."

■ CHANNEL 5 is defying threats of legal action and going ahead with a poster campaign aimed at spiking ITV's new *News at 6.30*, reports **Media Week**. Last week John Hardie, ITV's commercial director, wrote to the channel seeking the withdrawal of ads that claimed the ITV bulletin was stale because it went out a half hour later than the 6pm Channel 5 bulletin.

■ CHANGING FACES: Mark Gallagher from ITV network to be head of public affairs for ITN; former Cable and Wireless PR chief Adrian Moorey becomes corporate communications director for Civil Aviation Authority; Andrew Barnett from HSBC to head public affairs for National Consumer Council **(PR Week)**. David Davies, Editor of *Q* magazine, made editorial director of Emap's newly launched *Heat*; Amanda Stevenson, Editor of IPC's *Horse*, to work on new project for Emap **(Press Gazette)**.

Michael Foster, former chief executive of Chris Evans's Ginger TV, joins Northwestone Films ***(Broadcast)***.

Cable operator Telewest appoints Philip Jansen from Dunlop Slazenger as group marketing director **(Media Week)**.

■ GETTING THE BUSINESS: DFS Northern Upholstery moves most of its £30 million ad account to Young & Rubicam; Initiative Media wins European and Middle East media planning and buying for Calvin Klein; BT set to appoint Barraclough Hall Woolston Grey to handle publicity for change in phone numbers **(Campaign)**. BMP OMD wins £5 million media strategy and buying account for Eurotunnel; Procter & Gamble to institute women's art prize worth £20,000 plus in relaunch of Oil of Ulay **(Marketing Week)**. Del Monte picks Bozell network for £5 million European campaign to put new life into the Man from Del Monte **(Marketing)**.

MICHAEL LEAPMAN





The Porter Four: from left, Lori D'Angelo, Cara Rubinsky, Shawn Armbrust and Thomas McCann. The story of their investigation seems likely to be made into a Hollywood film

Snatched from death's door

Anthony Porter was just days away from execution when four journalism students took up his case. Giles Whittell reports

It was a journalism course with a difference. Four students were assigned to investigate the case of a man on death row, convicted of double murder, who had come within two days of being executed by the state of Illinois. But the students, Thomas McCann, Lori D'Angelo, Cara Rubinsky and Shawn Armbrust, were warned by their professor that the inmate could be dead by Christmas.

Six months later, 44-year-old Anthony Porter is alive and back home on the South Side of Chicago, a walking indictment of a criminal justice system that wrongfully imprisoned him for 17 years and would probably have killed him but for the efforts of McCann and friends. The students are now celebrities. Their scoop came thanks partly to their tenacity and partly to Professor David Protess, a driven mentor whose investigative journalism course at Northwestern University has become the unofficial vanguard of the state's anti-death penalty movement.

Since forcing the 1996 freeing of four black Chicago men wrongly sentenced to death for murder, Protess has received up to four letters a day from convicted inmates seeking him out as a de facto appeals court of last resort. If the available evidence looks flimsy, he may follow up, assigning cases to his undergraduate students on a first-come, first-served basis.

Now Protess's latest protégés are exhausted. The media attention has been endless. CBS filmed much of their investigation. NBC has re-created chunks of it, and the Chicago press has been playing catch-up throughout.

The story began one August night in 1982 when a young black man and his girlfriend were shot in the head after an argument about drugs beside a swimming pool in Chicago's Washington Park. The park, 40 minutes from Northwestern's leafy Evanston campus, is fringed by some of the bleakest and most dangerous public housing projects in America.

Confronted by the dead bodies of Jerry Hillard and Marilyn Green, police went straight for Porter. He had a reputation as a troublemaker and an IQ of 51. "He was a thug with a rap sheet and the cops were after him for every crime in the neighbourhood," says McCann. "They thought, 'If we can get him we'll be doing everyone a favour'."

They got him easily enough, finding two men prepared to identify him as the murderer, even though Porter swore that he was never at the pool that night. Convicted after a short trial, he was sentenced to death without his original lawyer present because his family had failed to come up with the $10,000 required.

For the next 17 years the only challenges mounted against his conviction were based on claims that he was mentally incompetent to stand trial. This may have been true, but there were also what D'Angelo calls "blatant contradictions" in the court record, including a claim by a crucial prosecution witness that Porter shot with his left hand even though he is right-handed.

Unusually, there was even an affidavit from the mother of one of the victims pointing to another man, Alstory Simon, as the culprit.

"It was pathetically obvious that someone else did it," says McCann, shaking his head.

But nothing was obvious when the four began piecing together the Porter paper-trail last September. All they knew was that ten days earlier he had been in a death-watch cell, 48 hours from a lethal injection, when an appeals court stayed the execution pending a review of his mental competence.



Anthony Porter on his release after 17 years on death row

About six weeks into their autumn term The Porter Four (they laugh at the team name) went to Washington Park to re-enact the crime. McCann played one of the key witnesses, D'Angelo the other. Armbrust put herself where Porter was alleged to have been. Rubinsky watched.

The witnesses said that Porter ran the long way out of the pool's fenced grounds after the shooting, when his obvious escape route would have been through an exit yards from where the bodies lay. They also claimed to have identified him at midnight from a distance at which McCann and D'Angelo could see almost nothing in broad daylight.

The group traced Alstory Simon to Milwaukee, a short drive north of Chicago and Armbrust's home town. She and Rubinsky visited him in mid-December for an informal interview, catching him in a state of selective amnesia. "He would oscillate between remembering nothing and remembering details that he could have known only if he was there," says Armbrust, who now wants to be a lawyer.

Two days later McCann went to see William Taylor, the only surviving witness to have incriminated Porter. He went with Paul Ciolino, a hulking private detective who often works gratis with Protess's students. The combination worked: Taylor signed an affidavit recanting his entire trial testimony, and McCann ran to a payphone to tell the professor. Protess has a reputation for intensity and duly "started screaming with excitement for maybe three minutes".

By the time Armbrust went home for Christmas she was dreaming about the case, she says. She spent much of the holiday sifting through police and court records in Milwaukee, where Inez Jackson, Simon's girlfriend at the time of the killings, was also living. In January, with the national media sniffing a big story but still several steps behind, Jackson agreed to be videotaped at Armbrust's home identifying Simon as the murderer.

After their crash course in the flaws of American justice, the students took their tape not to the authorities, but to CBS. The next day Ciolino dropped in on Simon to remind him that he could save an innocent man by doing the right thing. Finally, after seeing Jackson on television, he confessed.

The fallout from Simon's confession has barely begun. As an ecstatic Porter was released into the arms of his student saviours last month, in front of Chicago's imposing Cook County courthouse, senior officials began squirming — and with good reason. Since reinstating the death penalty in 1976, Illinois has executed 11 inmates and freed 11, giving it, in Protess's words, "a 50-50 error rate" — or worse, since he is convinced that at least one of those executed was demonstrably innocent.

Mainstream journalism has not distinguished itself either, in the students' eyes. "The media simply won't devote the resources for this kind of work," Protess says. "Most of what passes for journalism nowadays is reporters picking up the phone and talking to politicians and celebrities, rather than going into the real world and talking to real people."

This summer D'Angelo will work as an intern at the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. McCann will go to the *Cincinnati Inquirer*. Rubinsky and Armbrust have not decided yet.

Meanwhilethe calls have been coming in from Hollywood. "Hundreds of them," Armbrust says.

Pipped at the post — again

IPC has beaten Cabal to two new magazine launches. Is this just coincidence, asks Naomi Marks

Launching a magazine can be a fraught process. Failures are not only expensive, but there is also a fair amount of face to be lost. For a young company with a high public profile the stakes are even higher.

So when Cabal Communications, set up last summer by the magazine supremo Sally O'Sullivan, announced an indefinite delay in the launch of *Crime Weekly* — aimed at filling a niche in the women's sector — some at Cabal were irritated. The announcement came soon after a bigger publisher revealed that it was launching a one-shot, *Chat Crime & Passion*, to test the same niche that Cabal had spotted. That the rival was IPC, which O'Sullivan had left to go it alone after failing in her management buyout bid, added to the irritation.

But when news came that IPC was to launch another one-shot, also spinning out of the mass women's weekly *Chat* but this time dealing with health, that irritation turned to downright annoyance. *Chat Get Fit & Fab* went on sale earlier this week — just as the first issues of *Good Health*, under Cabal's ownership, hit the streets. It seemed as if something was up, especially as Cabal is believed to have secured the purchase of *Good Health* over IPC because the title's former owner was said to have been impressed by Cabal's "entrepreneurial attitude".

Linda Lancaster-Gaye, the managing director of IPC's women's weeklies group, says the fact that its two *Chat* specials appeared just before Cabal's launches is an absolute coincidence. The ideas for the launches, she says, came out of IPC's 14,000-strong panel of women's magazine readers, now its main research weapon. Results showed that more than a third had been robbed, burgled or mugged.

"[Crime] is an area that they are very interested in," says Lancaster-Gaye. "Our strategy is to focus on such areas, see how they sell and then assess how often we might want to bring them to the market."

Chat Get Fit & Fab also sprang from this research method, as will 23 more planned specials this year.

> 'We do not tailor our plans to the activities of rivals'

O'Sullivan, recently reported as saying that IPC was "on a mission to destroy us", is sticking to the same "coincidence" line as Lancaster-Gaye over the timing of *Chat Crime & Passion*, although she notes that 18 months ago, when she was at IPC, the company decided a crime-for-women title was a non-starter: "It was interesting to see them take this sudden direction. I had always thought it was a good idea."

And of the fact that IPC has announced a management overhaul, putting in place a Cabalesque flat management structure, she says: "I'm sure that's a coincidence, too."

There seem to be some interesting dynamics between IPC and its former employee. But O'Sullivan does not want, at least publicly, to speak of David and Goliath-style battles: "I don't think we'd even rate on the David scale."

Cabal, which was launched with £2.2 million in private backing, now has five titles, *Front*, *The Real Homes Magazine*, *Good Health*, *Maximum Mountain Bike* and *Procycling*.

O'Sullivan, the former editor of *Good Housekeeping* among others, remains upbeat. She says the company is on course to fulfil its target of 12 launches in its first year. *Crime Weekly*, she says, will make an appearance, though she is not sure when.

"Our plans are not, and never will be, tailored to the activities of another publishing house," she says. "We are just driven by the necessity of producing the very best magazines."

The F-word that hit the big time

DON KING wasn't the only winner in Madison Square Garden. While we wait to see if Lennox Lewis can overturn the injustice done to him in court or in the ring, Stephen Marks, the founder of French Connection, knows that he is on to a winner.

It was Marks, through his ad agency TBWA, that tied up a sponsorship deal with Lewis in December. In return for a reported £1.5 million (it was considerably less), Lewis agreed to wear French Connection's controversial "fcuk" logo on his shorts for the fight and in his training sessions. For Marks, the sight of Lewis at the weigh-in must almost have been better then the fight itself. But his eyes would not have been on Lewis's impressive torso. Instead, he could not have failed to notice "fcuk" resplendent on Lewis's ever-present ski hat.

Stefano Hatfield

The only question is whether the French Connection chain stocked enough ski hats in the weeks ahead of the fight. Since the launch of the fcuk campaign two years ago, French Connection's fortunes have been transformed. At the end of its first year, group profits were up 32 per cent and UK retail and wholesale profits up 72 per cent. UK sales were up a further 10 per cent in the most recent half-yearly results. There was a 21.5 per cent rise in group turnover. The company is opening new stores and franchises and the campaign is set to turn its fortunes around in the US. There, as here, the campaign is set to excite controversy.

And French Connection does not pretend any different. How could it when it has run rings around the Advertising Standards Authority, defending itself successfully against the charge that fcuk "brings advertising into disrepute". Fcuk is the strongest evidence around that advertising is no longer just about creating a beautiful TV commercial and supporting it with press and poster ads.

In fact all the distinctions between marketing disciplines that the industry clings on to in order to justify the status quo are entirely irrelevant to the late 1990s consumer. It's something TBWA's high-profile creative director, Trevor Beattie, has long understood. Think of the way he and his clients have exploited both free editorial coverage and integrated advertising, and packaging design for French Connection, Pretty Polly and Wonderbra. When consumers see fcuk on Lewis's shorts or hat, they don't think that's a clever piece of sponsorship, it's simply an ad. Make the imagery surrounding it cool enough and 1990s consumers will happily wear your ad for you. That's how "my place now", "Subliminal advErtising eXperiment", "I you want" and "night all long", together with the fcuk logo, have led to some 300,000 campaign T-shirt sales. The ad industry has never liked the campaign — partly because Beattie is a love-hate figure and because fcuk is just a simple wordplay. That said, some of the greatest campaigns in British ad history relied on a simple wordplay, and the fcuk poster campaign has been the most noticeable of the past two years.

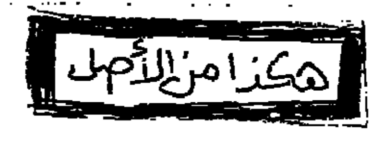
Lewis: headgear that says it all

The genius is its simplicity. And there's luck. For instance, the Lennox connection came about because Beattie knows Lewis's manager, Frank Maloney. Beattie is a boxing nut — who recently landed Muhammad Ali for an Equitable Life campaign. However, he has been too dismayed by the draw verdict to enjoy fcuk's success.

■ IT WAS Billy Connolly who described charity fatigue as "bollocks" during the recent Red Nose Day fundraising event. This week saw the launch of a new campaign that strikes at the heart of our ability to turn a blind eye to those who need help.

The new NSPCC commercial from Saatchi & Saatchi highlights the idea of covering our eyes when confronting distress. It features a teddy bear, an Action Man, a poster of Alan Shearer, and all the Spice Girls on the cover of *Smash Hits*. All this goes on to a soundtrack of adults being unbearably cruel to children. We don't see any shocking images. There is no blood or bruises or cowering children. And the ad is all the more powerful for it. The juxtaposition of such familiar icons with the notion of them covering their eyes is as disturbing an idea as you'll ever see in an ad.

● *Stefano Hatfield is Editor of* Campaign



House of Lords | Law Report March 19 1999 | Court of Appeal

Permitting contraventions

Nuttall v Vehicle Inspectorate

Before Lord Slynn of Hadley, Lord Jauncey of Tullichettle, Lord Nicholls of Birkenhead, Lord Steyn and Lord Hobhouse of Woodborough

[Speeches March 18]

"Permitting" contraventions of drivers' hours rules meant failing to take reasonable steps to prevent contraventions, and failure by an employer to examine tachograph charts could amount to a prima facie case of permitting contraventions.

The House of Lords allowed an appeal by the defendant, Shane Raylond Nuttall, trading as Redline Coaches, from the Queen's Bench Divisional Court (Lord Justice McCowan and Mr Justice Popplewell) (*The Times* April 30, 1997 (sub nom *Wing v Nuttall*): [1998] RTR 321), which had allowed an appeal by case stated by the prosecutor, the Vehicle Inspectorate, from Leyland Justices.

The justices had acquitted the defendant on 16 charges under section 96(11A) of the Road Transport Act 1968, as inserted by section 4(1) of and paragraph 9(2)(a) of Schedule 4 to the European Communities Act 1972 and amended by section 2(1)(c), (e) and (f) of the Road Traffic (Drivers' Ages and Hours of Work) Act 1976, sections 38 and 46 of the Criminal Justice Act 1982 and regulation 2 of the Community Drivers' Hours and Recording Equipment Regulations (SI 1986 No 1457).

Regulation 2 of the 1986 Regulations provides:

"Where, in the case of a driver of a motor vehicle, there is in Great Britain a contravention of any requirement of the applicable Community rules as to periods of driving or distance driven, or periods on or off duty, then the offender and any other person (being the offender's employer or a person to whose orders the offender was subject) who caused or permitted the contrevntion shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine..."

Mr Timothy King, QC and Mr Mark Laprell for the defendant; Mr Jonathan Foster, QC and Mr Paul O'Brien for the prosecutor.

LORD STEYN said that the case concerned the owner of a coach business who had decided not to examine charts produced by tachographs installed in his vehicles thereby disabling himself from discovering a series of drivers' hours offences committed by his drivers.

A tachograph was recording equipment that had the ability to record time, speed, distance travelled and work a driver was engaged on. It was a valuable aid in the promotion of road safety.

The charges against the defendant had been based on provisions of Council Regulation EEC 3820/85 (OJ 1985 L370/1) which laid down requirements in respect of driving periods, breaks and rest periods.

As an operator of vehicles the defendant also had to comply with the requirements of Council Regulation EEC 3821/85 (OJ 1985 L370/8) which provided for the installation, maintenance and use of recording equipment or tachographs in vehicles.

The justices had found that if the defendant had examined the charts he would have realised that the drivers had contravened the requirements of the Community rules.

But they had accepted that he had not examined them. In the case stated, explaining their reasons for dismissing the charges, they had said, inter alia:

"The defendant could not have the necessary knowledge to be guilty of these offences solely by his failure to check the tachograph charts ... [He] had no reason to examine closely the ... charts in the light of events at that time. The evidence before us did not lead us to find beyond a reasonable doubt that [he] did act recklessly or close his eyes to events."

Mr Justice Popplewell had said that the facts found by the justices supported a finding that the defendant had been reckless or had shut his eyes to what was occurring.

The defendant submitted that the Divisional Court had impermissibly blurred the distinction between recklessness and negligence.

Depending on the context, "permit" was capable of bearing a narrow meaning of assenting or agreeing to or a wider meaning of not taking reasonable steps to prevent something in one's power.

The latter best matched the present context, the manifest purpose of the Community rules being to place a responsibility on an employer of drivers to use tachograph records to prevent contraventions and promote road safety. The contextual meaning of "permitting" in section 96(11A) of the 1968 Act was failing to take reasonable steps to prevent contraventions by drivers.

The offence was not one of strict or absolute liability. Nothing less than wilfulness or recklessness would be sufficient.

In practice recklessness would be the relevant mens rea. If the defendant's state of mind was one of not caring whether a contravention of the rules took place that would generally be sufficient to establish recklessness.

Mr King had submitted that the prosecution had to prove at least that the defendant had had knowledge that the contravention was likely to occur, but his Lordship would not accept that qualification in the present context.

One had to take into account that the objective of section 96(11A) and the applicable Community rules was to protect road users. By ignoring tachograph records an employer took the risk that that conduct might imperil the safety of the public.

In the circumstances, if apart from proof of a series of contraventions by drivers the only evidence was an explanation by the employer that he had not examined the records over the relevant period, the case was capable of amounting to a prima facie case of failing to take reasonable steps to prevent contraventions in the state of mind of not caring whether they took place or not.

But a prima facie case could be rebutted, for example, if an employer gave evidence that he had taken some other precautions to prevent contraventions.

The justices had erred in concluding that the defendant had had no reason to check the tachograph charts. He had been obliged to perform periodic checks of them.

But the Divisional Court had gone too far in directing the justices to convict. It was for the justices to consider the facts, and it had been for them to decide whether the defendant's evidence that he had relied on the scheduling of vehicles could rebut a prima facie case of recklessness.

The direction to convict should be set aside and the case should be returned to the justices for a retrial.

Lord Slynn agreed with Lord Steyn. Lord Jauncey agreed with Lord Steyn and Lord Nicholls. Lord Nicholls delivered an opinion agreeing with Lord Hobhouse. Lord Hobhouse delivered an opinion concurring in allowing the appeal.

Solicitors: Backhouses, Blackburn; Dooley & Co, Liverpool.

Calculating residue of estate

In re Ratcliffe, deceased

Before Mr Justice Blackburne

[Judgment February 19]

Where a testator bequeathed residuary estate as to one-half to two non-charitable beneficiaries and the remainder on trust for four charities in equal shares, the two half shares of residue were to be calculated after providing for debts and funeral and testamentary expenses but before payment of the inheritance tax due in respect of the non-charitable beneficiaries' half share.

Mr Justice Blackburne so held in a reserved judgment in the Chancery Division on the application of the executors and trustees of Marjorie Beryl Ratcliffe, deceased, seeking the determination of questions relating to the construction of the will and of section 41 of the Inheritance Tax Act 1984.

By clause 4 of her will the testator bequeathed the residue of her estate, after payment of usual expenses, "as to the one-half part thereof for [the first and second defendants] in equal shares absolutely ... and as to the remainder of my estate upon trust for [the third to sixth defendants]..."

Mr Michael Johnson for the plaintiff; Mr Nicholas Warren, QC and Ms Emily Campbell for the first and second defendants; Ms Sonia Proudman, QC and Mr Tom Dumont for the four charities.

MR JUSTICE BLACKBURNE said that the half share of residue to which the four charities were entitled was exempt from the tax. The half share of residue to which the first and second defendants were together entitled was not.

Were the two half shares to be calculated after providing for the debts and expenses but before payment of inheritance tax due in respect of the first and second defendant's half share, so that the net benefit received by them would be less, through having suffered deduction of tax, than the net benefit received by the four charities: the gross division approach? Or were they to be equal half shares of net residue after deduction of the appropriate amount of inheritance tax: the net division approach?

The latter was the result reached in *In re Benham's Will Trusts* ([1995] STC 210).

In his Lordship's view, the gross division approach was correct. An equal division of disposable residue between the first and second defendants and the four charities meant that the inheritance tax attributable to the first and second defendants' half share was to be borne by that share: to subject the charities' half share to any part of that burden was prohibited by section 41(b) of the 1984 Act.

His Lordship was unable to find any principle in *Benham's Will Trusts* and would not follow it.

Solicitors: Jubb Longbothams, Halifax; Paisner & Co; Campbell Hooper, Victoria.

Recovering receiver's costs

In re Andrews

Before Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice Aldous and Lord Justice Ward

[Judgment February 25]

Where there had been no default by the prosecution, a receiver's costs of the receivership under a restraint order under the Criminal Justice Act 1988 could be recovered from the property subject to the order.

Even where the prosecution had failed in its entirety, the High Court did not have power to order that the prosecutor reimburse the defendant whose property had been subject to the order.

The Court of Appeal so held dismissing the appeal of Thomas Charles Andrews from the dismissal by Mr Justice Owen on October 3, 1997 of his summons dated June 5, 1997 for the payment by the Customs and Excise of the fees, charges, disbursements, expenses and all other costs of a receiver appointed by Mr Justice Schiemann under a restraint order pursuant to the Criminal Justice Act 1988 on July 7, 1994.

Section 89 of the 1988 Act provides:

"(1) If proceedings are instituted against a person for an offence or offences to which this part of the Act applies and ... (a) the proceedings do not result in his conviction for any offence ... the High Court may, on application by a person who held property which was realisable property, order compensation to be paid to the applicant if, having regard to the circumstances, it considers it appropriate to make such an order.

"(2) The High Court shall not order compensation to be paid in any case unless the court is satisfied (a) there has been some serious default on the part of a person concerned in the investigation or prosecution of the offence ... and (b) that the applicant has suffered loss in consequence of anything done in relation to the property by or in pursuance of ... an order under this part of the Act."

Mr Victor Joffe for the appellant; Mr Andrew Mitchell, QC, for the Commissioners of Customs and Excise.

LORD JUSTICE WARD said Thomas Andrews and his son Daniel had been arrested by Customs and Excise and charged with value-added tax offences.

Customs and Excise had seized £42,305 from Thomas's home and applied ex parte against both father and son for restraint and charging orders over their realisable property.

The realisable assets included the seized money, a property owned by Thomas and his wife and 56 heavy duty transport vehicles owned by companies which were alleged to be involved in VAT frauds. In the course of subsequent proceedings some £32,294 had been released by the receiver from the seized money, to pay Thomas's legal costs.

On December 11, 1995 Daniel was convicted but Thomas was acquitted of all charges and an order was made that his costs be paid out of central funds.

The restraint order against Thomas was discharged in January 1996. His solicitors subsequently realised that the receiver had retained the balance of the seized sum, £10,011. When asked to return it, the receiver said the balance had been used to defray the prior costs of receivership.

The case boiled down to this question: A receiver and manager properly appointed properly recovered her properly incurred costs of the receivership from an asset she had received. Now that the receivership had been discharged, should those costs of the receivership lie where they fell?

There was no reported authority on the question, although the following principles seemed capable of being stated:

1 A receiver or manager appointed by the court was an officer of the court, not an agent of either party in the proceedings.

2 Receivers must look for their indemnity to the assets which were under the court's control.

3 Unless any part of the receiver's remuneration could be treated as "costs" no question of discretion arose.

4 The receiver's lien over the assets gave him a continuing right to possession even after the discharge of the receivership order.

In the instant case, there was an agreement between the receiver and Customs and Excise that the latter would indemnify her if she were unable to bring in sufficient assets to meet her costs. That mirrored the statutory position under section 88(2) of the 1988 Act.

His Lordship found it intrinsically unfair that the applicant should be indemnified in the crown court but not in the Queen's Bench Division where the proceedings should stand or fall with the criminal proceedings.

But if the costs of the receivership were to be costs of and incidental to the proceedings and thus in the court's discretion by section 51(1) of the Supreme Court Act 1981, then the costs of the receivership should be costs of the proceedings at all stages of those proceedings and in all events.

The true position was that the investigation of whether or not the defendant had suffered loss by reason of the receivership was an investigation which should be and ordinarily would be conducted in deciding whether or not damages should be awarded against the plaintiff for breach of the usual undertaking as to damages a plaintiff would normally be required to give.

Such an investigation would enable justice to be done. In the instant case no undertaking was given and none ordinarily was.

Mr Mitchell had submitted that section 89 provided the defendant with the only relief to which Parliament thought he was entitled. There was no suggestion that the Customs and Excise officers had been guilty of any default in their investigation or prosecution of the offences. Section 89 simply did not provide an adequate remedy.

His Lordship was, with unfeigned reluctance, compelled to conclude that even if the expenses of the receivership were within the definition of costs they were not costs "of and incidental to the proceedings". They must lie where they fell. The appeal would be dismissed.

LORD JUSTICE ALDOUS agreed. On the facts of the case, the applicant might seem to have been treated unfairly as his £10,000 was used up as an expense of the receivership and therefore could not be recovered.

In his Lordship's view that was the result of the type of proceedings and the conditions for recovery laid down in the Act.

Parliament had specifically limited the reight to recover from a receiver to cases where negligence was established.

In his Lordship's judgment the claim was really a claim for compensation dressed up as an application for an award of costs. Section 89 was the proper avenue for the claim.

Lord Justice Hirst agreed.

Solicitors: Goldkorn Davies Matthias; Solicitor, Customs and Excise.

Appointing guardian ad litem

In re J (a Minor) (Adoption: Appointment of guardian ad litem)

Before Lord Justice Nourse and Lord Justice Ward

[Judgment March 10]

In contested adoption proceedings the appointment of a guardian ad litem was entirely a matter within the discretion of the judge. There was no reason to upset a decision to appoint a person who was independent and unbiased but who had long been involved in the case.

The Court of Appeal so held dismissing an application by the mother of a boy aged eight for leave to appeal against the appointment made by Judge Kenny in Reading County Court of the guardian ad litem in proceedings to free her son for adoption.

Mr Allan Levy, QC and Mrs Constance Whippman for the mother; Miss Gillian Brasse for the local authority; Mr Andrew McFarlane, QC, for the guardian ad litem.

LORD JUSTICE WARD said that in 1996 a care order was made in respect of the boy. In 1999, proceedings were launched to free him for adoption.

The mother sought the discharge of the appointment of Mrs A as guardian ad litem. The allegation was that because Mrs A had participated in a meeting at which adoption was discussed, she was, or gave an appearance of being so biased that she was incapable properly of discharging her duties under the Adoption Act 1976 and the Adoption Rules (SI 1984 No 265) to safeguard the best interests of the child and to perform her duties.

Judge Kenny found that Mrs A had not displayed any bias, had been extremely sympathetic to the mother on many occasions, had immense knowledge of the case and was the right person to be guardian ad litem to the boy.

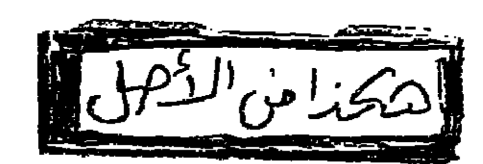
Mr Levy conceded that the appointment of a guardian ad litem was a matter within the judge's discretion but that that discretion was fettered. He drew the court's attention to a number of practice guides, including the *Manual of Practice Guidance for Guardians ad Litem and Reporting Officers* (HMSO 1992) which together spelt out, he said, the need for true independence.

His submission was that the guardian had to be independent, to be seen to be independent, to come to the case without preconceived ideas and without any prior involvement.

His Lordship said there was no error in the judge's approach to the case. As for his exercise of discretion, far from there being anything plainly wrong with it, the advantages of having this guardian involved, for the reasons of her familiarity with the case and with the boy, were so overwhelmingly in favour of her continuing that there was no possible prospect of success in the application.

Lord Justice Nourse gave a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Ms Beverley Golden, Southampton; Mr David Over, Reading; Hodders, High Wycombe.



THE TIMES

EDUCATION



TELEGRAPH COLOUR LIBRARY

A classical upbringing: American research suggests that a baby can benefit by exposure to the music of Mozart and other great composers

Music and brain power

Evidence that classical music boosts a child's ability to reason is growing. John Elderkin reports

The newest music craze to hit America does not rely on teenagers, clubbers, or even pop acts yet is so hot that Sony Music's attempt to capitalise on it will produce 100,000 CDs this year. What makes this even more unlikely is that the target audience comprises newborn infants.

By teaming up with Sony to guarantee each child born in state hospitals a free copy of the music disc *Build Your Baby's Brain Through The Power of Music*, Zell Miller, Georgia's Governor, joins the growing number of parents expressing interest in the potential effects of classical music on the newly born.

After learning of studies suggesting that listening to classical music can increase logic and mathematics abilities in infants, Governor Miller contacted Sony and began the CD giveaway last summer. The disc includes selections by Bach, Beethoven and Mozart.

The idea that prolonged listening to classical music can enhance brain development, dubbed the Mozart Effect, has been the subject of much recent research, in America and Europe. Parents who hope to "improve intelligence", as one advertisement puts it, can now choose from an array of products including CDs, interactive videos, and instructional books. One Internet company, Genius Babies, offers a variety of "developmental toys and products" to stimulate infant brains, including *Baby Mozart*, a video that Genius Babies claims can "increase brain capacity". Rhino Records in California also offers specialities, including *Baby Tunes: Mozart for Babies*, which features "baby-friendly instruments and arrangements" featuring gentle adaptations.

Don Campbell, author of two books on the Mozart Effect and purveyor of CDs with names like *Tune Up Your Mind* and *Mozart in Motion*, takes the long view. His advertisements cite disproportionately high numbers of musicians entering university and medical schools, and claim that "the very best engineers and technical designers in the Silicon Valley industry are, nearly without exception, practising musicians".

Most psychologists agree that music stimulates newborn children. An Irish study claimed to show that babies can recognise specific music while in the womb. But there is no conclusive evidence on what effect this has on developing minds. Researchers have demonstrated that a child's ability to reason, listen and, in effect, learn, develops rapidly until age six, then levels off. The more stimulation a young brain receives, the more it "develops", and therefore the higher the child's intelligence, or so the argument goes.

Suggestions that classical music, with its combinations of stirring and calming effects within complex and simple structures, is an ideal stimulus for young minds, seem to fit easily within this line of reasoning. Schools in Britain and America report that if students listen to classical music before lessons, there are fewer discipline problems. As a group, children who study music score higher on standardised intelligence tests than children who do not. Dr Gordon Shaw of the University of California at Irvine has demonstrated that pre-schoolers who learn to play musical instruments improve their spatial reasoning abilities noticeably.

Pete McPhail, a music consultant for Soundabout, a music therapy service in Oxford, says that his work with profoundly handicapped infants leaves no doubt that "one-year-olds respond to music, and learn to make musical choices that serve as communication tools". In effect, these children's language skills are enhanced by exposure to music and sound.

None of this settles the issue of whether merely listening to classical music can increase a person's intelligence. The most persuasive evidence comes from Dr Shaw's 1993 study that generated most of this controversy in the first place.

College students there were given spatial reasoning tests after listening to either ten minutes of Mozart's Piano Sonata K448 or ten minutes of silence. The Mozart group scored better than the silence group.

The next study tested students after they listened to Mozart, but this time the second group listened to rock music. The Mozart group again showed improvement.

Dr Frances Rauscher, a psychologist who worked with Dr Shaw, says that these results were misconstrued by many to suggest that only classical music was valuable, which attracted hate mail and even threats from rock 'n' rollers.

According to *The Washington Times*, a Virginia high school student tried to replicate this study with mice. He exposed one group to hard rock music for ten hours a day for three weeks while testing the rodents' ability to navigate a maze. Another group of mice, exposed to classical music, actually increased their maze performance, while the hard rock mice killed and cannibalised each other. At that stage, the experiment was brought to a halt.

Dr Susan Hallam of London's Institute of Education believes that music can stimulate children emotionally, perhaps putting them in a relaxed state of mind that might explain higher test scores. But she does not agree that the human brain is pre-wired to function better with exposure to classical music. In 1996 she divided 8,000 British children into three sets similar to the University of California study. Before spatial reasoning tests, one set listened to Mozart, a second to oral instructions and a third to Blur and Oasis. The Blur-Oasis group scored slightly higher than the others, but no significant differences appeared. Perhaps a generation of mathematical geniuses will one day emerge to settle the issue.

LINKS

edpage@the-times.co.uk
www.musica.cnlm.uci.edu
www.geniusbabies.com

Can Whitehall run 24,000 schools?

Professor Tim Brighouse, teachers' guru and inspirational chief education officer of Birmingham, let it be known this week that he would be resigning from the Government's standards task force. The decision will be a blow to David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, who is already struggling to convince teachers that he has their best interests at heart. But what difference will it make in the classroom?

The resignation has been interpreted as the result of an inevitable clash of personalities between Professor Brighouse and Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools. The pair had been appointed joint vice-chairmen of the task force to embody the Government's promised combination of "pressure and support" to raise standards in schools.



Clashes there certainly have been. Professor Brighouse accused Mr Woodhead's Ofsted agency of "conducting a reign of terror"; the Chief Inspector has responded in kind several times. Professor Brighouse acknowledged yesterday that he and Mr Woodhead had "disagreed about practically everything", but the suspicion remains that the resignation has more to do with a feeling that he was wasting his time.

The task force was established in a blaze of publicity almost two years ago, part of Mr Blunkett's promise to transform the Department for Education and Employment into an "evangelist" force to spread best practice among schools. The Education Secretary chose to chair the committee himself, peppering the membership with well-known classroom practitioners. But what has the body actually achieved?

There have been regular meetings, including a weekend session at Windsor, and subcommittees have been formed. But nothing has ever been published and its workings remain a mystery to outsiders. Perhaps the opposing philosophies of Professor Brighouse and Mr Woodhead have produced a stalemate, but the impression has been created of an ineffectual talking shop.

Cries of "told you so" must be echoing around Whitehall, as teachers' leaders queue up to remind ministers that they said from the start that the harnessing of opposites would never work. Many saw the appointments as a means of preventing a damaging public feud between two senior government advisers, neither of whom has spoken with much enthusiasm about the work of the task force since.

The deafening silence that has surrounded the task force contrasts sharply with the rest of the DfEE's evangelist mission. Strategies and targets have tumbled out of the department with a regularity that has alarmed many head teachers. Almost 200 civil servants and secondees from the world of education have changed the relationship between schools and Government. Primary schools, in particular, are now subject to more detailed prescription in mathematics and English than Mr Blunkett's predecessors ever dreamt possible.

Criticism of such interventionism has become the Tories' main avenue of attack in education debates. David Willetts, the Shadow Education and Employment Secretary, constantly urges Mr Blunkett to leave teachers to exercise some professionalism, accusing him of ever-increasing centralism. It is a charge that is difficult to refute, but ministers appear confident that parents will back them while their efforts are obviously directed towards raising standards.

Time will tell whether central directive is more successful than local initiative and what the impact will be on teacher recruitment. Critics argue that talented graduates will be even less likely to join a profession where their room for manoeuvre is so limited, but it may be that the absence of effective classroom guidelines has in the past acted as a discouragement.

Professor Brighouse is maintaining a discreet silence on where he stands in this debate, but it is noticeable that he is also resigning from the Government's task force on educational development. He insisted yesterday that his motivation was the need to devote more time to Birmingham, but his approach in the city has been very different from the Government's. He wrote a series of articles on the teaching of reading, for example, but stopped short of telling teachers to use phonics, the cornerstone of the Government's literacy strategy.

Like the orginal concept of combining pressure and support, there is a fine line to be drawn between spreading effective classroom practice and trying to control 24,000 schools from Whitehall. John Dunford, general secretary of the Secondary Heads Association, said last week that he hoped the literacy strategy was not too successful, or ministers would want to direct teaching in all subjects. He was only half-joking.

Just make it wicked

Children want a sophisticated read, says Rachel Morris

RICHARD CANNON



Rachel Morris and some of the magazine's target audience

Really, it's enough to make a mother weary. As the parent of any ten-year-old will tell you, we are in the season of educational panic. The results of tests for independent schools are due; and at the end of May every Year 6 child in the country must endure the SATS (the Government's standard assessment tests). The school tells us that the SATS are not important but the children know better. If the SATS don't matter, why have they been revising for them since September?

And now, to add to my weariness, a magazine has landed on my desk. *JAM*, "the first educational magazine for eight to 11-year-olds", as the press release describes it, is said to be filling a gap in the market, although this gap is not very apparent, because the shelves in our local bookshop are groaning with educational books for children, the shelves in our Apple dealer's shop are loaded with more of the same and I cannot find anything in our local toy shop that does not claim to have an educational purpose.

I tried out *JAM* on half a dozen nine and ten-year-olds, three boys and three girls, half of them fairly academic and half of them not. All thought it a bit on the thin side for £1.95 and that it looks like the freebie magazines they are given at school by a well-meaning but dull local authority. The more academically inclined were happy to do the quizzes and the boys quite liked the articles on planets and electricity, although the girls groaned at the babyish story.

But when I handed it to the less academic children, they took one look at the cover (which asked them to practise their mathematics and English skills), then flipped through it in a polite but bored way. They all told me that it wasn't wicked (by which they mean not stylish, not glossy and especially not dangerous enough).

And that is the problem. These are children who can reach the highest levels on the PlayStation (ask a ten-year-old the significance of this) who can perform grinds on the pavement (again consult a ten-year-old) and who can glide on Rollerblades like birds.

All their lives they have been wooed by manufacturers selling the latest high-tech equipment. For these children, fashion is something to die for, and they think that they can lead deeply stylish lives without knowing the first thing about dividing fractions.

It is going to take more than a *Blue Peter*-ish magazine to enchant these children with education. But then, as all of them said, *JAM* is aimed not at them but at me. Would I buy it? Quite possibly, although I doubt that it will make much difference to their educational achievements. At this minute, four of my guinea-pigs are performing jumps on their Rollerblades, while two are giggling over a bad film version of *Jane Eyre*. One way or another, most ten-year-olds these days are far more sophisticated than we think.

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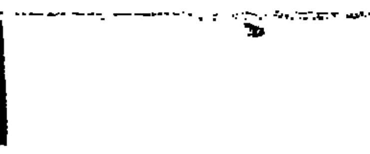
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ALL BOX NUMBER REPLIES SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO: BOX No........ THE TIMES NEWSPAPERS P.O. BOX 3553, VIRGINIA ST, LONDON, E1 9GA

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EDUCATION



GOLF

Lowery puts on style around the greens

FROM JOHN HOPKINS IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA

STEVE LOWERY, an amiable journeyman professional who ambles along the fairways with a permanent grin on his face, gave an immaculate display of putting in the opening round of the Bay Hill Invitational and Colin Montgomerie had a ringside seat as he did so. As Lowery holed putts from all over the place on his way to a 67, Montgomerie, one of Lowery's playing partners, had to grit his teeth and accept that the putts disappearing from view for Lowery will not do the same for him.

Montgomerie, playing in the first group of the day, admits that it is a long time since he putted well. Last week, at a tournament just down the coast, he was accurate from tee to green and averaged 32 or 33 putts for each round. It was more of the same yesterday when, if anything, Montgomerie was even more accurate but could not convert this into anything better than a one-under-par 71.

On a glorious morning, with little or no wind and a temperature in the low eighties, Montgomerie, Lowery and Neal Lancaster had no one in front either to hold them up or leave any indentations in the greens, just about perfect conditions.

For the first few holes, there was dew on the ground. Montgomerie played his last six holes with only three errors, all on the 16th, and one of those was so slight that it can hardly be described as such. His drive had to go down the left-hand side of the fairway to facilitate the second shot on this long par-five.

Montgomerie's travelled a little too far left and ended in rough. The lie was not penal enough to prevent him from using a wood, which he hit into a greenside bunker, hardly the most heinous crime.

The bunker was above the hole, so the bunker shot was more difficult than usual. Montgomerie managed this beautifully, his ball landing on the firm green 20 feet or so short of its target and stopping three feet short of the flag.

He missed the putt, and demonstrated mock anger by pretending to hurl his putter at his bag as it lay on the ground and pretending to do likewise with his glove.

Otherwise, his striking was solid, his accuracy excellent. All that was missing was similar accuracy with his putter. He holed from no more than three feet on the 13th after a wonderful approach, but putts for birdies on the 14th, 15th 17th and 18th all missed. None was longer than 18 feet, and just to rub in his own feelings of frustration, Montgomerie had to watch Lowery hole twice from 15 feet, twice from 25 feet and once from 35 feet.

During Lowery's outstanding round, he could not help but be reminded of a personal tragedy that had befallen him and his family last month. Lowery was competing in Tucson, Arizona, when his house on the side of the 4th hole here burned down. It is still a sorry sight. "Three more 67s and he will be able to afford to buy a new house," Montgomerie joked.

It is one of life's rules that there is always someone worse off. No matter how much Montgomerie bemoans his present lack of success with the putter, he is playing better than Thomas Bjorn.

Bjorn had an eight on a par-five, a five on a par-three and finished with a 79. "I am doing all the things I normally do, but it is just not there," Bjorn said. "I am going to miss the cut here and that means I shall not get into the Players' Championship next week. I shall practice and try and get some feel back into my swing."



TOM HEVEZI

Ross McFarlane, whose interest in the Sunningdale Foursomes ended yesterday, plays at the 3rd hole

McFarlane feels the pain

BY MEL WEBB

ONE of the enduring charms of the Sunningdale Foursomes is its total disrespect for reputations: the player who enters it expecting past achievement to be of the slightest relevance is liable to come a nasty cropper. Ask Ross McFarlane — the cropper he came yesterday was a classic of its kind.

McFarlane, the only European Tour professional to survive to the quarter-finals of this the tournament this year, is a good, steady tournament golfer who won the European Tournament Players' Championship in 1997, for which he got a five-year exemption. His exemption to play in the 1999 Sunningdale Foursomes, on the other hand, ran out abruptly when he and Mark Palmer were shunted into a siding by the amateur pairing of Lisa Walters and Richie McEvoy.

Walters and McEvoy won at the 19th hole with a birdie four, but the force had been with them for a good longer than that. McFarlane and Palmer played enough decent golf to have won inside 18 holes, but the amateurs stuck to their coat-tails with relentless determination.

It was all square after 17 holes and both pairs missed the green at the 18th. McFarlane had a tricky little shot from off the green and handled it well, cooly chipping to 15 inches. Professional 1, Amateur 0, right?

Wrong. The pressure was on Walters. A duffed shot here would have seen the curtains drawn discreetly over the match, but she rose to the occasion like a veteran, splashing out of greenside sand to six inches. The hole was halved in four, the match all-square. McFarlane and Palmer had had their chance, had not taken it and were about to pay the price, the handicap of having to give six strokes to their opponents ultimately too much.

The first quarter-final was won by Alex Boatman, whose mother, Liz, is a former Curtis Cup captain, and Crispin Manson, who beat Ian Harrison and Mark Plummer at the 20th hole, while the other two matches brought easy victories for Bill McColl and Stephen Shields and Tim Markwick and Ian Roper.

RESULTS FROM SUNNINGDALE

FOURTH ROUND: M Plumber (Castle Coombe) and I Harrison (Ross-on-Wye) bt K Staunton and Z Scotland (Woodcote Park) 1 hole; A Boatman (Royal Worlington) and C Manson (Sunningdale) bt N Hansen and D Parris (North Foreland) 2 and 1; M Palmer (Mill Ride) and R McFarlane (PGAET) bt D Honam and L James (East Dorset) 4 and 3; L Walters (Chevin) and R McEvoy (Thorpe Hill) bt A Wainwright (Garforth) and A Ambler (Malton Golf Centre) 3 and 2; S Moir (Letham Grange) and E Wilson (Forfar) bt T Paterson (Leatherhead) and R Goudie (Epsom) 1 hole; T Markwick (South Winchester) and I Roper (Corhampton) bt M Side (Shirley Park) and D Clarke (Richmond) at 20th; D Copsey (Coulsdon Manor) and J Edwards (Knole Park) bt W Salthouse and Y Ali (Ealing) 2 and 1; B McColl and S Shields (Thorpe Hall) bt P Creamer (Chiddingfold) and C Cowper (Jack Nicklaus Golf Centre) 2 and 1.

QUARTER-FINALS: Boatman and Manson bt Plumber and Harrison at 20th; Walters and McEvoy bt Palmer and McFarlane at 19th; Markwick and Roper bt Moir and Wilson 4 and 3; McColl and Shields bt Copsey and Edwards 5 and 4.

Nicholas gets quickly back into the swing

FROM PATRICIA DAVIES, IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA

ALISON NICHOLAS returned to competition with an opening birdie four in the first round of the Standard Register Ping at Moon Valley in Phoenix, Arizona, yesterday.

The Englishwoman, who won the Sunrise Hawaiian Open last month, started at the 10th, a par five of 530 yards, and holed a 10-foot putt for her birdie, the best possible start after a two-week break.

The early leaders, at two under par, included the distinguished trio of Se Ri Pak, Helen Alfredsson and Meg Mallon, as well as Sophie Gustafson, a promising Swede who has had an unpromising start to the season. She has missed four cuts in seven tournaments so far, but went out in 34, two under par, with birdies at the 1st and 8th.

At the 9th, where her drive finished so close to the water that she was in danger of falling in as she swung, Gustafson cleared the lake with her second, but tweaked it well left and did superbly to rescue her par four.

Mallon, who conceded Gustafson a generous half in their singles match at the Solheim Cup at Muirfield Village last September, is renowned for her sporting nature. Next week, she is to receive the William and Mousie Powell Award, a tribute from her peers, who vote each year for the member who best exemplifies the spirit, ideals and values of the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA).

Tim Howland, the relatively new chief executive of the European LPGA Tour, is here with John Mort, the tour's managing director, for consultations with the Solheim family, sponsors of the biennial Solheim Cup and the US LPGA, whose new commissioner takes office on Monday. Ty Votaw, who has worked for the US LPGA for several years, is replacing Jim Ritts, who is moving into the Internet business.



Nicholas: impressive return

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES 0171-782 7344

PUBLIC NOTICES

DAVIES Alan William Davies late of Harrow, Middlesex died there on 3 November 1998 (Estate about £65,000).
DOYLE Edna Doris Doyle widow late of Tooting, London SW17 died there on 18 November 1998 (Estate about £15,000).
PARKIMOND Norman Parkimond late of Andover, Hampshire died at Winchester, Hampshire on 4 February 1997 (Estate about £10,000).
GANE Frank Thomas Gane late of Hanham, South Gloucestershire died at Bristol on 2 November 1998 (Estate about £45,000).
FERGUSON Leslie Ferguson late of Sunderland, Tyne and Wear died there on 25 October 1998 (Estate about £7,000).
HOOPER Dorothy Hooper widow late of Barnt Green, Birmingham died there on 6 September 1998 (Estate about £33,000).
JOHNSON James Edward Johnson late of Newcastle Upon Tyne died there on 8 December 1998 (Estate about £73,000).
JOYCE Amos Joyce otherwise Amos James Joyce late of Halifax, West Yorkshire died there on 27 December 1996 (Estate about £20,000).
LANE formerly STEWART formerly FARGEON nee KALAMEES Erica Lane formerly Fargeon nee Kalamees single woman late of Epsom, Surrey. Died Cobham, Surrey on 28 January 1998 (Estate about £9,000).
MANN, NEE BYERS Jane Mann otherwise Jennie Mann, nee Byers widow late of Scarborough, North Yorkshire died there on 13 November 1998 (Estate about £12,000).
NAVRACSICS Antal Navracsics late of Wimbledon, London, SW19 died at Battersea, London, SW11 on 29 January 1998 (Estate about £7,000)
OSWALD John Gerald late of, Leicester, Leicestershire died there on 14 November 1998 (Estate about £8,000)
RISSONE Amelia Lilian Rissone spinster late of Camden, London NW3 died there on 23 August 1998 (Estate about £10,000)
The kin of the above named are requested to apply to the Treasury Solicitor (B.V.), Queen Anne's Chambers, 28 Broadway, London SW1H 9JS, failing which the Treasury Solicitor may take steps to administer the estate.

LICENSING ACT 1964
FOR THE PETTY SESSIONAL DIVISION OF SOUTH WESTMINSTER
TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN
We, Dean Duske and Andrew Paul Taylor both of HP Foods Limited Mollison Avenue Enfield Middlesex EN3 7JZ respectively having during the past six months carried on the trade or calling of General Manager and Company Director respectively do hereby give notice that it is our intention to apply at the Transfer Sessions for the said Division to be held at Horseferry Road Magistrates Court, 70 Horseferry Road, London, SW1P 2AX on 8th April 1999 at 10.00 o'clock in the forenoon for the provisional grant to us of a Justices' Restaurant Licence authorising us to sell by retail intoxicating liquor of all descriptions for consumption on the premises situate at Unit 5, 65/72 The Strand, London, WC2, more particularly delineated on plans deposited with the Clerk to the Licensing Justices and to be known by the sign of Amoy Noodle Restaurant.
Given under my hand this 16 March 1999
Jeffrey Green Russell
Apollo House
56 New Bond Street
London W1Y 0SX
Solicitors and authorised agents for the applicant

ALAN otherwise IWANISZYN Victor Alan otherwise Wlodzimierz Iwaniszyn late of Peterborough, Cambridgeshire died there on 27 March 1998 (Estate about £14,000) The widow and kin of the above named are requested to apply to the Treasury Solicitor (B.V.), Queen Anne's Chambers, 28 Broadway, London SW1H 9JS, failing which the Treasury Solicitor may take steps to administer estate.

LEGAL NOTICES

NO: 001716 OF 1999
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
CHANCERY DIVISION
COMPANIES COURT
IN THE MATTER OF C F H HOLDINGS LIMITED
AND
IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Petition was on 8th March 1999 presented to Her Majesty's High Court of Justice for the confirmation of the cancellation of the share premium account of £7,520,815 of the above-named Company.
AND NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the said Petition is directed to be heard before Mr Registrar Buckley at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LL on Wednesday 31st March 1999.
ANY Creditor of Shareholder of the said Company desiring to oppose the making of an Order for the confirmation of the said cancellation of the share premium account should appear at the time of the hearing in person or by Counsel for that purpose.
A copy of the said Petition will be furnished to any such person requiring the same by the undermentioned Solicitors on payment of the regulated charge for the same.
DATED this 15th day of March 1999.
TITMUSS SAINER DECHERT
2 Serjeants Inn
London
EC4Y 1LT

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF JOINT ADMINISTRATIVE RECEIVERS
PRIDEPOOL HOMES LIMITED T/A BENONI NURSING & RESIDENTIAL HOME
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT N H O'Reilly & S. B. Ryman of Clareville House 26 - 26 Oxendon Street London SW1Y 4EP were appointed Joint Administrative Receivers of the aforementioned company on the 11 March 1999 by BANK OF SCOTLAND EDINBURGH

THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986
ASTRA PACK FURNITURE LIMITED
(IN ADMINISTRATIVE RECEIVERSHIP)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 2445399
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 48(2) of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the unsecured creditors of Astra Pack Furniture Limited will be held at 10.30 am on 14 April 1999 at the offices of PricewaterhouseCoopers, 101 Barbirolli Square, Lower Mosley Street, Manchester, M2 3PW. The purpose of this meeting is to receive the report prepared by the administrative receivers and, if the creditors think fit, appoint a creditors' committee.
Creditors wishing to vote at the meeting must lodge details in writing of the debt claimed to be due from the company to M Horrocks at PricewaterhouseCoopers, 101 Barbirolli Square, Lower Mosley Street, Manchester, M2 3PW, by no later than twelve noon on Tuesday 13 April 1999, together with any proxy which the creditor intends to be used on his behalf at the meeting. Any claims duly lodged will be admitted to vote subject to the provisions of Rule 3.11 of the Insolvency Rules 1986.
Creditors whose claims are wholly secured are not entitled to attend or be represented at the meeting.
Creditors should note that the meeting is not being held for the purpose of appointing a liquidator to the company.
A copy of the report to creditors, prepared in accordance with Section 48 of the Insolvency Act 1986, will be available upon request from this office.
Dated this fifteenth day of March 1999
M Horrocks
Joint administrative receiver

INSURANCE COMPANIES ACT 1982
ORG RE U.K. INSURANCE LIMITED
FORMERLY KNOWN AS SKANDIA UK INSURANCE PLC
TRANSFER OF GENERAL BUSINESS
1. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Org Re U.K. Insurance Limited, formerly known as Skandia U.K. Insurance Plc, applied to the Financial Services Authority on 24th February 1999 for approval, pursuant to Schedule 2C of the Insurance Companies Act 1982 as amended, to transfer to Skandia Insurance Company Limited (publ) London Branch all of its rights and obligations under certain policies of insurance and reinsurance written by it in the United Kingdom prior to 2nd October 1995 as set forth in the Statement of Particulars.
2. A copy of the Statement of Particulars of the proposed transfer is available for inspection at Skandia House, 23 College Hill, London EC4R 2SE from Monday to Friday between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm, excluding public holidays, until 22nd April 1999.
3. Written representations concerning the transfer may be sent to the Financial Services Authority, 25 The North Colonnade, Canary Wharf, London E14 5HS before 25th May 1999. The Financial Services Authority will not determine the application until after considering any representations made to it before that date.

IN THE MATTER OF ISLEGROVE LIMITED (A COMPANY INCORPORATED IN ENGLAND AND WALES AND REGISTERED UNDER COMPANY NUMBER 1310682) (the 'Company') AND IN THE MATTER OF THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986
NOTICE IS GIVEN that the last date for proving debts against the Company, which is being voluntarily wound up, is 27th April 1999 (the 'last date for proving'). Claims must be sent by this date to Thomas Michael Rogers of Dixon Wilson, Rotherwick House, 3 Thomas More Street, London E1 9YX, the liquidator of the Company.
The liquidator intends to make a final distribution to creditors shortly after the last date for proving and such distribution may be made without regard to claim of any person in respect of a debt not already proved.
Note: This notice is purely formal and the directors believe that all known creditors have been, or will be, paid in full.
DATED THIS __ DAY OF __ 1999
Thomas Michael Rogers
Liquidator

HILBREST LIMITED
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SB MORTGAGE SECURITIES NO.24 PLC
SB PLACEMENT NO.2 LIMITED
PS 4 LIMITED
PE 1994 LIMITED
(ALL IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: On 5 March 1999 the above companies were placed into Members' Voluntary Liquidation and Martin Fishman and Roy Bailey of PO Box 55, 1 Surrey Street, London WC2R 2NT were appointed Joint Liquidators by the Members.
The Liquidators give notice pursuant to Rule 4.182A of the Insolvency Rules 1986 that the creditors of the companies must send details, in writing, of any claim against the companies to Martin Fishman at PO Box 55, 1 Surrey Street, London WC2R 2NT by 5 May 1999.
The Liquidators also give notice under the provision of Rule 4.182A (6) that on 5 June 1999 they intend to make a final return to creditors who have submitted claims by 5 May 1999 and that there will be no further distribution to creditors. The final return to creditors will be made without regard to the claim of any person in respect of a debt not already proved. The companies are able to pay all of their known creditors in full.
M FISHMAN
Joint Liquidator

X GROUP LIMITED
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986, that a meeting of the creditors of the above named company will be held at the offices of Leonard Curtis, situated at One Great Cumberland Place, London W1H 8LE, on 31st March 1999 at 12.00 for the purposes provided in Section 98 et seq. It is not intended to propose any resolutions at the meeting concerning Liquidators remuneration, however the meeting may receive information about, or be called upon to approve, the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the meeting. A list of names and addresses of the above company's creditors can be inspected at the offices of Leonard Curtis, One Great Cumberland Place, London W1H 8LE, between the hours of 10.00am to 4.00pm on the two business days preceding the Meeting of Creditors.
DATED THIS 15th March 1999
G. Hoare - Director

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE PUBLISHED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE UNDER SUBSECTIONS 8(5) AND 10(6) OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT 1984

The Secretary of State hereby gives notice as follows.

1. He proposes to grant to CityLink Telecommunications Limited ("the Licensee") a licence under the Telecommunications Act 1984 ("the Act") to run telecommunications systems for Project Connect: a Government Private Finance Initiative to ensure that London Underground Limited (LUL) receive the modern transmission and radio services its railway business requires. The Licence will be for a period of 25 years subject to earlier revocation in specified circumstances.

2. The principal effect of the licence will be to enable CTL to install and run a telecommunication system for the provision of a wide range of telecommunication services to LUL (and any successor train operating company), the British Transport Police, any person providing services to LUL (or any successor train operating company) relating to the operation of the London Underground (for example, future infrastructure companies proposed under the Government's Public-Private Partnership (PPP) proposals), any sub-contractors who are engaged in the construction, maintenance, operation or safety of the London Underground and emergency organisations who might need to respond to incidents on the Underground.

3. The Secretary of State proposes to apply the Telecommunications Code ("the Code") to CTL subject to certain exceptions and conditions in a restricted geographical area. The effect of the exceptions and conditions to the application of the Code is that the Licensee will have duties:

(a) to comply with various safety and environmental conditions, in particular (with certain exceptions) to install lines underground or only on such above-ground apparatus as is already installed for any purpose;

(b) to comply with conditions designed to ensure efficiency and economy on the part of the Licensee, in connection with the execution of works on land concerning the installation, maintenance, repair or alteration of its apparatus;

(c) to consult certain public bodies before executing particular powers under the Code, including the local planning and highway authorities, English Nature and the National Trust, as well as relevant electricity suppliers;

(d) to keep and make available records of the location of underground apparatus and copies of the exceptions and conditions in the licence to their powers under the Code; and

(e) to ensure that sufficient funds are available to meet certain liabilities arising from the execution of works.

4. The reason why the Secretary of State proposes to apply the Code to CTL is because he does not consider it practicable for the system to be installed in the envisaged timescales without its application and because it appears to him that the running of the system will benefit the public.

5. The reason why it is proposed that the Code as applied should have effect subject to certain exceptions and conditions referred to above are that they are considered requisite or expedient for the purpose of securing that the physical environment is protected, that there is no greater damage to land than necessary, that the systems are installed as safely and economically as possible, and that the Licensee can meet (and relevant persons can enforce) liabilities arising from the execution of works.

6. Representations or objections may be made in respect of the proposed licence, the application of the Code to CTL and the exceptions and conditions referred to above. They should be made in writing by Thursday 15th April 1999 and addressed to the undersigned at the Department of Trade and Industry, Communications and Information Industries Directorate, 275/Grey, 151 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1W 9SS. Copies of the proposed licence can be freely obtained by writing to the Department or by calling 0171-215 1785.

Roger Close 19 March 1999

Department of Trade and Industry

MCPL REALISATIONS LIMITED (IN ADMINISTRATION) (FORMERLY MACDONALD & CO. (PUBLISHERS) LIMITED)

The scheme supervisors of MCPL Realisations Limited (in Administration) (formerly Macdonald & Co. (Publishers) Limited) give notice of their intention to pay a final distribution under the Scheme of Arrangement approved under S425 of the Companies Act 1985 as approved by the Court on 20 September 1995. Under the terms of the Scheme, claims had to be notified to the scheme supervisors by 25 November 1995. The administrators hereby give notice that claimants who, whilst having given notice of their potential claim, have not completed a valid notice of claim form, will cease to be entitled to receive any distribution unless a valid claim form is submitted to the Administrators within 30 days of this advertisement.
A V LOMAS
Joint Scheme Supervisor
MCPL Realisations Limited,
c/o PricewaterhouseCoopers,
No 1 London Bridge,
London SE1 9QL, United Kingdom
11 March 1999

TRUSTEE ACTS

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to s27 of the TRUSTEE Act, 1925 that any person having a CLAIM against or an INTEREST in the ESTATE of any of the deceased person's whose names, addresses and descriptions are set out below is hereby required to send particulars in writing of his claim or interest to the person or persons mentioned in relation to the deceased person concerned before the date specified; after which date the estate of the deceased will be distributed by the personal representatives among the persons entitled thereto having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

MACLEAN formerly RHYMES nee HANIGAN Marion Elizabeth MACLEAN formerly RHYMES nee HANIGAN late of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire died there on the 27 November 1997 (Residuary Estate about £28,000). The kin of the above named are requested to APPLY to Mrs H Copeland, 3, Old Windmill Way, Long Crendon, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP18 9BQ, failing which the Treasury Solicitor may take steps to collect the undisposed estate

RACING: FITZGERALD HELPS BROTHER-IN-LAW TO OVERHAUL PIPE WITH GOLD CUP WIN

Nicholls has sights set on trainers' title

By Alan Lee, Racing Correspondent



THE brothers-in-law made Cheltenham a family affair again. Paul Nicholls and Mick Fitzgerald were once more the centre of attention after See More Business's Tote Gold Cup win and a remarkable Festival has opened up unexplored horizons for them both. Nicholls could even disturb an apparent monopoly by becoming the season's champion trainer.

The Gold Cup prize-money of £150,000 took Nicholls ahead in the trainers' table for the first time. Martin Pipe, undisputed champion for so long, is suddenly under threat. "To be on top for one day is good enough," beamed Nicholls. "We've cracked it. But I have still got 60 horses to run and I can tell you I'll be going for it."

It is barely conceivable that Fitzgerald will take the National Hunt jockeys' title — at least unless something dreadful befalls Tony McCoy, who still leads him by 34. But for a man who almost gave up on British racing, four Festival winners and the London Clubs Trophy as jockey of the meeting is not bad to be going on with.

Fitzgerald has never been short of something to say and he was typically eloquent after the middle leg of yesterday's 636-1 treble, begun by Katarino in the Elite Racing Club Triumph Hurdle and concluded by Stormyfairweather in the Cathcart Challenge Cup.

Declining the offer of victory champagne, he spoke bubblingly of See More Business, then reflectively of his own altered circumstances. "I could be rounding up sheep in New Zealand," he said. "I was ready to go there a few years back, even had a job lined up, but a small trainer called Ray Callow rescued my career here."

Fitzgerald, 28, was born in Cork and served his apprenticeship on the Curragh but he was always destined to be too heavy for the Flat. On coming to England, he scraped a living riding as a freelance but it was only when he joined Nick Henderson that he left the breadline of his profession and fulfilment beckoned.

When he won the Grand National on Rough Quest in 1996 he caused mirth among others and months of teasing for himself by saying on television that the feeling was "better than sex". He was more cautious yesterday but explained: "When I got beaten in the Gold Cup on Rough Quest that same year I was absolutely gutted. I wanted to feel what the winner was feeling and, now that I do, it won't go away for a very long time."

Nicholls, whose wife Bridget is the sister of Fitzgerald's wife, Jane, grew up just outside Bristol, the son of a policeman. After a successful career as a jockey, he began renting the stables owned by Paul Barber at Ditcheat, Somerset, in 1991. He had the benefit of some affluent owners but long ago discarded the need for privilege.

Nicholls has established a training method that works and a team of trusted aides that gels. His head lad, to whom he gave much of the credit for Call Equiname's win is the Queen Mother Champion Chase, is Clifford Barker, previously with David Nicholson. Barker has had previous Festival triumphs to savour but, for Nicholls, it was virgin territory.

"I suppose I did begin to wonder if I would ever have a winner here but you have to put that sort of thing behind you and get on with life," he said. "Now, it has all changed." A winner on each day of the greatest show in racing has made sure of that and now there are no boundaries beyond Nicholls. Pipe is a restless sort at the best of times but sleep may have been exceptionally elusive last night.

☐ A Tote Jackpot pool of £295,473 is carried forward to Fakenham today. The Tote also announced record on-course turnover for the three days at Cheltenham this year. A total of £8,169,769 represented an increased of 11 per cent.


Fitzgerald and See More Business leave the favourite, Florida Pearl, toiling in third in the Tote Gold Cup

Retirement looms for Nick Dundee

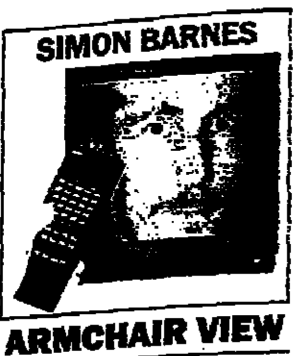
By Chris McGrath

NICK DUNDEE needed so much luck to escape with his life at Cheltenham on Wednesday that he seems unlikely to be granted the surplus necessary for him to race again. The Irish novice had given substance to his huge reputation by reaching the third last in the Royal & SunAlliance Chase on the bridle, but his fall at that fence appears to have brought a heartbreaking end to the most promising of careers.

Nick Dundee has had a splint and cast fitted to his left hind leg at Valley Equine Hospital in Lambourn. His owner, John Magnier, is seeking advice on X-rays of the fetlock joint from vets at Coolmore Stud and in America, but the odds are firmly against the horse racing again. Trevor Sainty, a spokesman for the Hospital, said: "He's very comfortable, eating and drinking well. It is quite a nasty injury but the leg is weight-bearing."

The other unhappy episode at Cheltenham on Wednesday concerned Tony McCoy's use of the whip on Majadou in the Mildmay of Flete Chase. Malcolm Wallace, the Jockey Club's director of regulation, yesterday elaborated the reasoning behind the four-day suspension — for hitting his mount when clearly winning, and doing so in the wrong place anyway. "He was hitting the horse across the ribs and he knows that is wrong," Wallace said.

The joy and pain of business at the racecourse



Genuine. It's a word horse-people use a lot. He's a really genuine horse, we say. Not meaning that he's genuinely got four legs with hooves on, but that there is a fundamental honesty about him. At base, he is on your side.

Ask him to jump something, and if he can, he will: straight and true and no messing about. Ask him to gallop, and he'll gallop. If he hurts, he will genuinely try to work through the pain: because he's that type of horse.

No doubt about the human star of the Cheltenham Festival: Paul Nicholls, a man with a full moon face who looks like a copper. Those who watched Channel 4's coverage over the past three days will have had plenty of opportunity to get an impression of Nicholls, because he kept being interviewed in the winner's enclosure.

Three winners, including the big one, the Gold Cup yesterday, with See More Business. Speaking pleasantly, modestly, with a West Country burr: no airs, no side, no pretension. A thoroughly good sort: and I think utterly genuine.

I went to visit him a week before the Festival, at a time when most trainers simply cannot be bothered with strangers coming to the yard. But it is Nicholls's nature to be obliging. And as to looking like a copper: well, it is all in the genes. His dad was a policeman.

Nicholls would make a very decent bobby himself: but it happened that he got the horsey bug when young, a changeling, a cuckoo in the nest. And he has got to where he is on that devastatingly original mixture of hard work and talent. He trains down near Castle Cary in Somerset, and his horses run up the steepest gallop I have ever seen: "Like the north face of the Eiger," John Francome told viewers.

I paid my visit in order to have a few words with Double Thriller, the unknown quantity of the race. But the previous year, I had paid Nicholls a visit to talk to another big, burly steeplechaser, See More Business. And there was something about him I took to at once.

Swaggering out of his box with an air of effortless dominance: body language that reminds you of that great dominant type, Desert Orchid: the same self-same swagger, the same self-belief. And liking the horse I was dismayed when he was carried out of the Gold Cup last year.

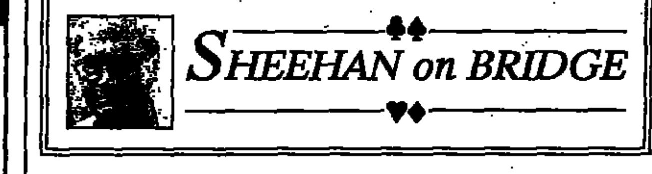
But when asked to pick my horse to follow for the season for *Horse and Hound*, I went back to See More Business — and seemed at once to have put the kibosh on his entire season. Very quiet: a shadow of his former self. Overlooked in just about every preview of the big race.

And me, I was all over Teeton Mill, the grey trained by Venetia Williams. Lord, this is a fearful game: television brought us that image of Teeton Mill, whacking a fence and in the first stride afterwards I shouted aloud: "He's gone." We heard later that Teeton Mill had slipped the tendon off his off-hind hock — leaving his career in the balance.

At the other end of the race all was joy, as See More Business ran on up the hill with the strength and the courage of a truly genuine horse. He should have won it last year: but never mind that now.

It was a great run, and as Nicholls, for once putting modesty aside, felt obliged to point out, it puts him at the top of the trainer's table.

So it is time to cheer a thoroughly decent man, and his thoroughly genuine horse. Another Festival ends, and the nerves of all involved have been given the once over by a mechanical flail. There is no other game in which joy and anguish are so close. Television and Channel 4, by bringing us the joy and never ducking, though never gloating over the anguish, did us proud.



By Robert Sheehan, Bridge Correspondent

Begin Bridge with *The Times*: Lesson 48 – Responder's second bid after opener has shown extra values

In the last couple of weeks I have looked at responder's second bid after opener's minimum rebid. If opener makes a bid which shows extra values the principles are the same but it is often difficult for inexperienced players to appreciate that when opener shows a good hand they do not need such a good hand themselves in order to bid on.

Take the following rather ordinary responding hand:

♠ A 10 6 5 ♡ 10 5 4 ◇ Q 5 ♣ K 10 8 6

Now consider the following bidding sequences:

(A) Opener	Resp'r	(B) Opener	Resp'r	(C) Opener	Resp'r
1 D	1 S	1 D	1 S	1 D	1 S
2 D	?	3 D	?	3 S	?

On *Sequence (A)* responder has a clear pass, but on *Sequence (B)*, where opener shows extra values and a six-card suit, he should try Three No-Trumps. The queen of diamonds should help solidify partner's suit and the ace of spades is a sure trick. All should be well if the opponents can't take too many hearts and there is no way to find that out. The game bonus is worth taking some risk. Generally speaking, when your partnership's main suit is a minor you should prefer to have a go at Three No-Trumps about because eleven tricks are a lot to make. On *Sequence (C)*, while responder would have happily passed a raise to Two Spades, it is clear to press on to game when partner shows extra values.

Those were all pretty straightforward. Now try these:

(D) Opener	Resp'r	(E) Opener	Resp'r	(F) Opener	Resp'r
1 D	1 S	1 H	1 S	1 D	1 S
2 NT	?	3 D	?	3 C	?

On *Sequence (D)* you are well worth a raise to Three No-Trumps, though you might have settled for a conservative raise to Two No-Trumps had partner simply rebid One No-Trump. On *Sequence (E)* partner has forced to game (i.e. shown 19 HCP or equivalent) with at least five hearts and at least four diamonds. You should show your three-card support for his first suit by giving him *preference* to Three Hearts. On *Sequence (F)* partner has also forced to game but this time has five diamonds and four clubs. Although you have only 9 HCP you have a great hand – the queen of his first suit, four-card support headed by the king for his second suit and an ace on the side. Raise him to Four Clubs because there may be a slam in clubs – but more of this in a future lesson.

☐ You can get any lessons you may have missed from this beginners' course by sending two 26p stamps per lesson (or five stamps per set of five) to Sally Brock, 73 Totteridge Lane, High Wycombe, Bucks HP13 7QA. Don't forget to state which ones you want.



By Raymond Keene
Chess Correspondent

Loss on time

In the 19th century, tournament chess was often painfully slow, since there was no constraint in early competitions on the speed at which players moved. For over 100 years though, chess clocks have regulated the rate of play. The harsh penalty for exhausting your thinking time is to lose by forfeit.

In today's game, which completes my record off all the decisive encounters from Linares, grandmaster Vassily Ivanchuk achieves a winning position against Britain's Michael Adams. However, on the very last move of the time control, Ivanchuk's clock flag fell before he could finish making the move on the board. This victory briefly catapulted Michael Adams into sole lead in the tournament.

White: Vassily Ivanchuk
Black: Michael Adams
Linares 1999

Nimzo-Indian Defence

1	d4	Nf6
2	c4	e6
3	Nc3	Bb4
4	Qc2	0-0
5	a3	Bxc3+
6	Qxc3	b6
7	Bg5	Ba6
8	e3	d6
9	Nf3	Nbd7
10	Nd2	c5
11	dxc5	bxc5
12	Bd3	h6
13	Bh4	Ne5
14	Bc2	Ng6
15	Bg3	Nh5
16	f3	Nxg3
17	hxg3	f5
18	0-0-0	Qf6
19	Qxf6	Rxf6
20	Nb3	e5
21	Na5	Rb8
22	e4	f4
23	g4	Rb6
24	Rd2	Nf8
25	Rhd1	Kf7
26	Ba4	Ke7
27	Nc6+	Rxc6
28	Bxc6	Bxc4
29	Kc2	a5
30	Kc3	Bf7
31	b4	axb4+
32	axb4	cxb4+
33	Kxb4	Ne6
34	Rxd6	Nd4
35	Rd7+	Kf8
36	Rd8+	Ke7
37	Rd7+	Kf8
38	Ba4	Rb6+
39	Ka5	Rb8
40	Ra7	White lost on time

Diagram of final position

Keene online

You can send me your queries, puzzles, problems and games direct by email. The address is keenechess@aol.com. The best contributions from *Times* readers will be published either here or in the Saturday Times Weekend column.

Times book

The Times Winning Moves 2 contains 240 chess puzzles from International Grandmaster Raymond Keenes daily column in *The Times*, and is available now from bookshops or from B. T. Batsford Ltd (tel: 01797 369966 at £6.99+p&p).

☐ Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

TAZZA
a. A footballer
b. A bowl
c. Tea

TOWHEE
a. An urban dweller
b. An ejaculation of triumph
c. A bird

UPPING
a. An Old Boy of Uppingham
b. A diacritic mark
c. Persecuting swans

UVEA
a. The vine
b. No Way
c. The coloured bit of the eye

Answers on page 50

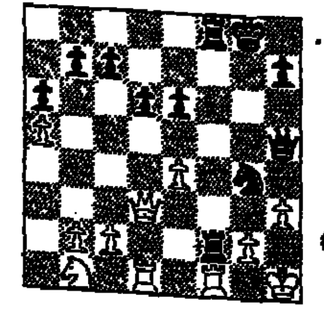
WINNING MOVE

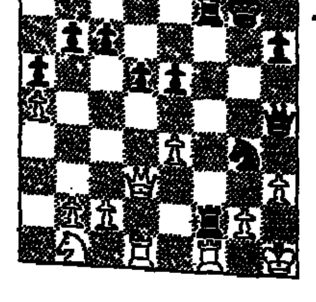
By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Aaron - Keene, Hong Kong 1984.

The black rooks are powerfully placed. How did he now make maximum use of them to tear into the white kingside?

Solution on page 50





Chris McGrath on a tenacious performance by horse and rider in the Stayers' Hurdle

Johnson works hard for Anzum reward

THE conjunction of the Cheltenham Festival and David Nicholson's sixtieth birthday always promised trouble. After the remarkable victory of Anzum in yesterday's Bonusprint Stayers' Hurdle, however, they will do well to distinguish today's party from the celebration of the trainer's seventieth. There will, at any rate, be few finishes to match this epic in the interim.

Betting at this year's Festival has reached a new intensity and punters were especially inspired by the Stayers'. A triangular market had formed between Le Coudray, exported from France to Ballydoyle by the intrepid J P McManus and the ante-post gamble of the meeting: Lady Rebecca, unbeaten in four visits to Cheltenham this season; and Deano's Beeno, a typically doughty front-runner trained by Martin Pipe. At 40-1, Anzum was running for the bookmakers.

Deano's Beeno was expected to examine his rivals' stamina but the drying ground appeared to inhibit the freedom of his gallop and rhythm of his jumping. Instead it was Sallie's Girl who took command on the home turn, where Lady Rebecca drifted wide, taking Le Coudray with her. Norman Williamson and Charlie Swan both held their mounts together for the final climb, Swan on Le Coudray finding his task conspicuously the easier as they swamped Sallie's Girl.

He waited until well inside the last 100 yards before bursting two



lengths clear. Suddenly, however, there was Anzum. At the final hurdle, he had laboured into fourth; a yard from the line, he plunged his neck in front. Richard Johnson, who had already rowed from Putney to Mortlake before the others came off the bit, reserved a last kilojoule to clench his fist in exultation.

"I walked off the lawn thinking he was going to be third or even second and that was great," Nicholson said. "I couldn't see the big screen. Then Arthur Moore came up to me and said we'd won. I couldn't believe him. The horse was never on the bridle and at the turn I thought he'd be placed at best, but Richard just kept kicking and pushing."

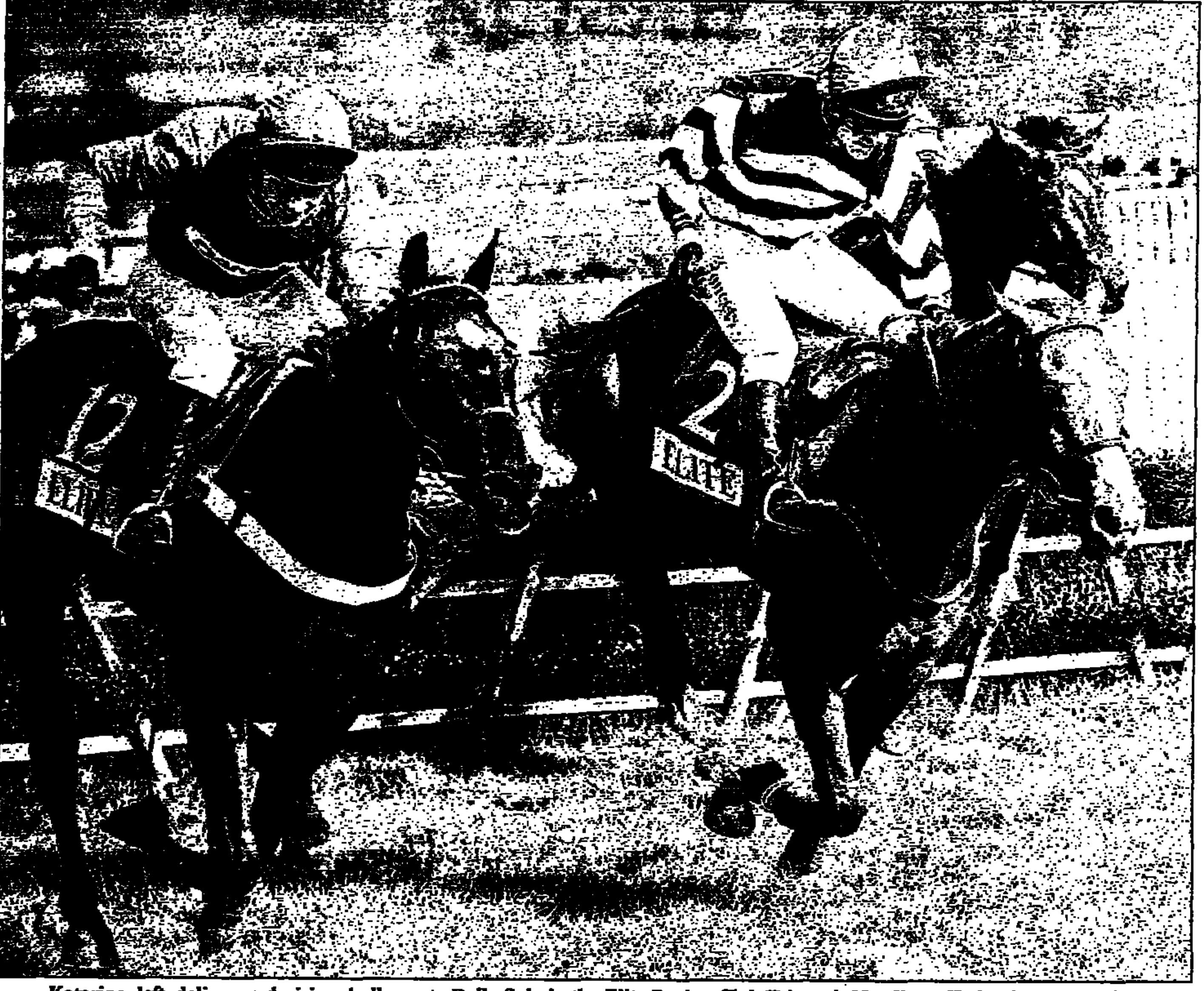
Johnson, 21, was breaking his Festival duck but will ride many more winners up a hill that punishes any faltering of conviction in horse or jockey. "To ride a winner here tops everything," he said. "I think I'm as shocked as David."

He was wrong there, though, as Nicholson had taken 50-1 against Anzum earlier in the week. "He's a tough horse who was third in the Triumph here and then second in this two years ago," he said. "He hasn't the best of legs and the staff have done a great job."

There had been a similar instance of success being out of the fire in the Elite Racing Club Triumph Hurdle, though in the case of Katarino the punters felt only gratitude to Mick Fitzgerald. The 11-4 favourite never travelled with any comfort off a ferocious gallop, but buoyant jumping kept his cause alive and he sprang past Balla Sola at the last and bounded eight lengths clear.

"He was always in top gear but he's tough," Nicky Henderson, his trainer, said. "He has already run in a steeplechase in France and isn't the sort of Flat horse you usually get in this race, but his jumping got him there. We may take him back to his native country for the four-year-old championship in June."

Another new star emerged from the hunting field when Castle Mane tore up the hill for an impressive success in the Christies Foxhunter Chase — earning inevitable comparisons with the former stablemate, whose star fizzled out so wanly yesterday. "He has to be as good as Teeton Mill was last year," Caroline Bailey, his trainer, said.



Katarino, left, delivers a decisive challenge to Balla Sola in the Elite Racing Club Triumph Hurdle at Cheltenham yesterday

ROB WRIGHT

2.20 Connel's Croft | 3.50 Misconduct
2.50 Knock Leader | 4.20 Mr Dick
3.20 Yankee Lord | 4.50 Hurricane Jane

Timekeeper's top rating: 2.20 LUCY TUFTY.

Carl Evans: 4.20 Mr Dick.

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES) TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

2.20 FAKENHAM CAR CENTRE SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE
(£1,815: 2m) (8 runners)

101 41/30 THE GREAT FLOOD 129 (D,F) (Wessex House Racing) C Dwyer 8-12-0 O McPhail (5) 38
102 060-05 AMONG ISLANDS 8 (D,S) (R Hughes) G Charles-Jones 8-11-10 L Cooper (7) 24
103 644-24 COURT JOKER 18 (G) (H Alexander) H Alexander 7-11-7 Mr R Forristal (5) 67
104 30/444 BLOTOFT 123 (CD,G) (R Forman) S Gollings 7-11-6 D Gallagher 54
105 2F0-25 LUCY TUFTY 13 (F,G) (G Prodromou) G Prodromou 8-11-5 Michael Brennan [illegible]
106 5P5-5P AJDAR 11F (CD,F,S) (P Lamyman) Mrs S Lamyman 8-11-3 R Farrant 45
107 462384 CONNEL'S CROFT 17 (V) (BCD Steels Ltd) P Evans 7-10-8 A Maguire 81
108 4P0P60 BON LUCK 15 (M Ephgrave) B Preece 7-10-0 Mr H Ephgrave (7) 47

BETTING: 11-4 Lucy Tufty, 3-1 The Great Flood, 4-1 Connel's Croft, 9-2 Court Joker, 8-1 Blotoft, 10-1 Among Islands, 16-1 Ajdar, 33-1 Bon Luck.

1998: SPRINGFIELD RHYME 7-10-8 Mr S Durack (4-1 fav) S Gollings 11 ran

A typically teasing Fakenham seller. It would be rash to dismiss The Great Flood, whose third to Xaipete over course and distance earlier in the season gives him a sound chance despite his big weight. Lucy Tufty is another to merit serious consideration on her second to River Frontier over course and distance, respectable form at this level. However, slight preference is for CONNEL'S CROFT, who seemed to struggle to stay over 2m 3f when fourth to 7llast in a competitive seller at Catterick last time. This shorter trip may help. Blotoft has a lengthy absence to overcome, while Among Islands and Ajdar have been well beaten this term. Court Joker is a better prospect but is an infrequent winner.

2.50 EDP CHAMPION FOR NEWS NOVICES CHASE
(£3,456: 3m 110yd) (8 runners)

201 5/513U HARDING 14 (S) (S Tindall) S Mellor 8-11-8 C Webb [illegible]
202 -6500P IN THE VAN 32 (Mrs S Thomson Jones) Mrs D Haine 7-11-2 S Durack —
203 50P-05 JOKERS CHARM 21 (N Mason) N Mason 8-11-2 R Guest —
204 1-U242 KNOCK LEADER 28 (D,F,G,S) (A Solomon) O Sherwood 7-11-2 J A McCarthy 94
205 PP04-P LANG WHANG 58 (Mrs N Bowlby) Mrs A J Bowlby 8-11-2 D Leahy —
206 2P22-F NIRVANA PRINCE 24 (D,F,S) (D Portman) B Preece 10-11-2 J Mogford (7) —
207 U2-02F TAKE COVER 23 (S) (A & M Barnett) M Tompkins 8-11-2 A Maguire 115
208 U11/3 STORMING LADY 94 (BF,D,G,S) (M Roberts) M J Roberts 9-11-1 Mr R Forristal (5) 97

BETTING: 9-4 Knock Leader, 7-2 Harding, Take Cover, 4-1 Nirvana Prince, 5-1 Storming Lady, 33-1 In The Van, 50-1 Jokers Charm, Lang Whang.

1998: BROADWATER BOY 10-11-5 R Garritty (10-11 fav) M Hammond 5 ran

KNOCK LEADER was no match for the useful House Captain on his chasing debut over this course and distance last month but certainly showed enough to suggest a race such as this is well within his compass. Harding has a chase victory to his credit, at Folkestone in January, but that was over two miles but minus marks are a question about his stamina and the jumping errors which marred his latest start. Take Cover is another who has ability without convincing that he has yet got the hang of chasing, and a greater threat could be Nirvana Prince. Although he blotted his copybook first time out, the balance of his form is solid enough for this standard of race and he was a creditable second over course and distance last season when arguably set too much to do on the final circuit.

3.20 GRAHAM BUILDING SUPPLIES HANDICAP CHASE
(£4,282: 2m 5f 110yd) (8 runners)

301 12/P12 YANKEE LORD 22 (S) (Boys In Red) S Sherwood 7-11-10 G Bradley 116
302 -5F131 DANGER FLYNN 67 (C,G,S) (R Brazier) Mrs P Sly 9-11-9 D McPhail (5) 114
303 P34-31 PRO BONO 28 (CD,F,G,S) (W Caudwell) W Caudwell 9-11-5 Mr A Sansome 106
304 331342 NOSAM 3 (D,F,G,S) (N Mason) N Mason 9-11-5 R Guest 114
305 R-U164 WHIPPERS DELIGHT 28 (D,G,S) (S Tindall) G Charles-Jones 11-10-9 L Cooper (7) [illegible]
306 3F3465 SISTER ROSZA 21 (S) (P Lamyman) Mrs S Lamyman 11-10-8 R Farrant 117
307 00-UPP JUST BRUCE 31 (F,S) (A Heath) Mrs E Heath 10-10-0 Mrs F Needham 61
308 1440PF EPSILO DE LA RONCE 25 (G) (E Harvey) A H Harvey 7-10-0 R Wakley —

BETTING: 2-1 Yankee Lord, 5-2 Danger Flynn, 5-1 Nosam, 7-1 Pro Bono, Whippers Delight, 8-1 Sister Rosza, 50-1 Just Bruce, Epsilo De La Ronce.

1998: BASSENHALLY 8-11-4 W Marston (9-1) Mrs P Sly 9 ran

Pro Bono runs well here and can again be expected to put up a bold show. Danger Flynn has also won at the track, but his success was handed to him on a plate with the last-flight departure of Salmon Breeze. More interesting is YANKEE LORD, who weakened when second to Smarty over three miles at Huntingdon last time. The return to a shorter trip can help him regain winning ways. Nosam is consistent although his jumping is not always as fluent as it might be. Whippers Delight, not especially consistent, is preferred to the out of form Sister Rosza.

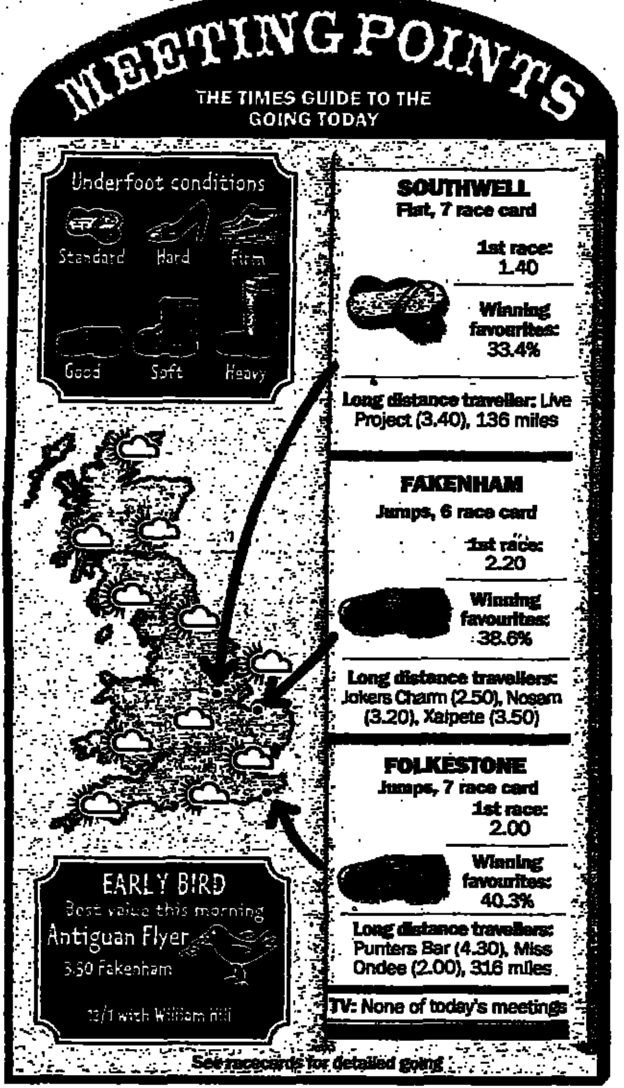
3.50 TOTE HURDLE (SHOWCASE HANDICAP AND TOTE TRIFECTA RACE)
(£5,280: 2m) (9 runners)

401 631P01 GET THE POINT 8 (D,S) (R Houlton) S Gollings 5-12-2 (7ex) D Gallagher 98
402 13-221 PROVINCE 6 (B,D,S) (J Brown) C Mann 6-12-2 (7ex) J Magee 95
403 P40-60 BLURRED 67 (Mrs P Kamran) M Tompkins 6-11-10 D Yellowlees (7) 57
404 142113 XAIPETE 63 (BF,CD,F,G,S) (N Mason) N Mason 7-11-7 R Guest 87
405 4/14-5 ETHARISTO 69 (B,D,G,S) (Mrs P White) J Cullinan 10-11-7 Mr J Crowley (5) —
406 -21005 ANTIGUAN FLYER 28 (CD,G) (G Prodromou) G Prodromou 10-11-5 Michael Brennan [illegible]
407 00611 MISCONDUCT 17 (D,S) (Playmates) Mrs M Jones 5-11-0 A Maguire 90
408 -01155 CADBURY CASTLE 22 (D,G,S) (S Tindall) G Charles-Jones 5-10-11 L Cooper (7) 94
409 /4U266 PHARLY REEF 28 (CD,G) (V Guy) D Burchell 7-10-3 D J Burchell 88

BETTING: 9-4 Misconduct, 9-2 Get The Point, 5-1 Province, 13-2 Xaipete, 8-1 Etharisto, Cadbury Castle, 10-1 Antiguan Flyer, 14-1 others.

1998: ANTIGUAN FLYER 9-10-3 Michael Brennan (11-2) G Prodromou 6 ran

Province did favourite backers a favour at Sandown last Saturday despite hanging violently under his amateur rider in the closing stages. He can be assured of stronger handling here and, in a race lacking much strength, should give another good account despite having to carry in excess of 12st. The one to beat, though, looks the progressive MISCONDUCT. A winner three times on the Flat last summer, she has flourished over timber in recent weeks — winning with any amount in hand at Folkestone and then Catterick. Those efforts have not gone unnoticed by the handicapper but, with better still to come, she can complete her hat-trick. Get The Point was all out to win a modest race at Towcester eight days ago and, having run poorly in his previous two starts, looks up against it under his 7lb penalty. The versatile Xaipete switches back to hurdles after a profitable time over fences. He's won here in the past and is likely to give a good account if fully wound up after an absence of two months. Antiguan Flyer and Cadbury Castle are both at their best when forcing the pace. Preference is for the former, who won this race last year and will be suited by the drying ground.



GUIDE TO OUR RACECARD

101 113143 GOOD TIMES 13 (BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 12-0 B West (7) 88

Racecard number. Six-figure form (F—fell. P—pulled up. U—unseated rider. B—brought down. S—slipped up. R—refused. D—disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing; F if flat. (B—blinkers. V—visor. H—hood. E—Eyeshield. C—course winner. D—distance winner. CD—course and distance winner. BF—beaten favourite in latest race). Going on which horse has won (F—firm, good to firm, hard. G—good. S—soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. Timekeeper's speed rating

4.20 WILLIAM BULWER-LONG MEMORIAL NOVICES HUNTERS CHASE
(£2,023: 2m 5f 110yd) (14 runners)

501 1PS-2F A RIGHT SET TWO 23 (G) (J Short) Mrs Melanie Driver 7-11-9 Mr N King (7) —
502 1R-P3R BARNADOWN 13P (G,S) (Miss J E Cook) S Andrews 9-11-9 Mr S Andrews —
503 U12-P4 BUACHAILL DANA 33P (F,S) (Miss J Garley) Miss J Garley 9-11-9 Mr A Sansome —
504 44503- CHESTER BEN 300P (G) (M Barthorpe) Mrs F Barthorpe 10-11-9 Mrs F Needham (3) —
505 PP/1P JUNGLE FRESH 26P (G) (Mrs R Pilkington) Mrs R Pilkington 6-11-9 Mr C Vigors —
506 PPP221 LIFE OF BRIAN 13P (G) (J Whyte) J Whyte 8-11-9 Mr M Gingell (7) —
507 /11P-2 MR DICK 19P (F,G,S) (Mrs J Cooper) Mrs J Cooper 9-11-9 Mr S Swiers —
508 112R-3 RIVERS END 6P (F,S) (I Mann) Mrs T Hill 10-11-9 Mrs T Hill (7) [illegible]
509 3633-P ROSCOLVIN 20P (F) (Mrs J Read) Mrs J Read 7-11-9 Mr N Bloom (5) 56
510 4/32P- SHEEMORE 390P (E Haddock) E Haddock 6-11-9 Mr A Evans (5) —
511 /102-2 STARLIGHT FOOL 27P (G) (S Beard) Mrs J Saunders 10-11-9 Mr T Lane (7) —
512 P/4/3- TOMMYS WEBB 396 (A Hargrove) C Nimmo 11-11-9 Mr L Lay (3) —
513 PP241- WINTERS COTTAGE 298P (F) (M Lloyd) M Lloyd 11-11-9 Mr G Hanmer (5) —
514 /PU0-P WORTHY MEMORIES 20P (Mrs E B-Payne) Mrs E B-Payne 10-11-4 Mr R H Fowler (7) —

BETTING: 6-4 Mr Dick, 4-1 Life Of Brian, 7-1 Rivers End, 10-1 Starlight Fool, Winters Cottage, 12-1 Jungle Fresh, 16-1 A Right Set Two, 20-1 others.

1998: STONEY VALLEY 8-11-9 Mr M Gingell (4-1) B Dowling 12 ran

In a race that makes limited appeal as a betting medium it may prove safest to side with MR DICK. He has less to do than when he last ran under Rules, at Aintree last April behind the useful Martha's Boy, and shaped encouragingly when second to Forest Fountain in a point-to-point at Market Rasen last month. Moreover, he will get plenty of assistance from the saddle as Stephen Swiers rides. Life Of Brian, who beat Bugsy Moran in a point at Higham 13 days, may be the one who gives him most to do. Winters Cottage would have been placed in a hunter chase at Ludlow in March but for pulling up as if something was amiss. This will be his first race under Rules since. A Right Set Two is a fair pointer but still has something to learn about jumping. None of the other runners make much appeal.

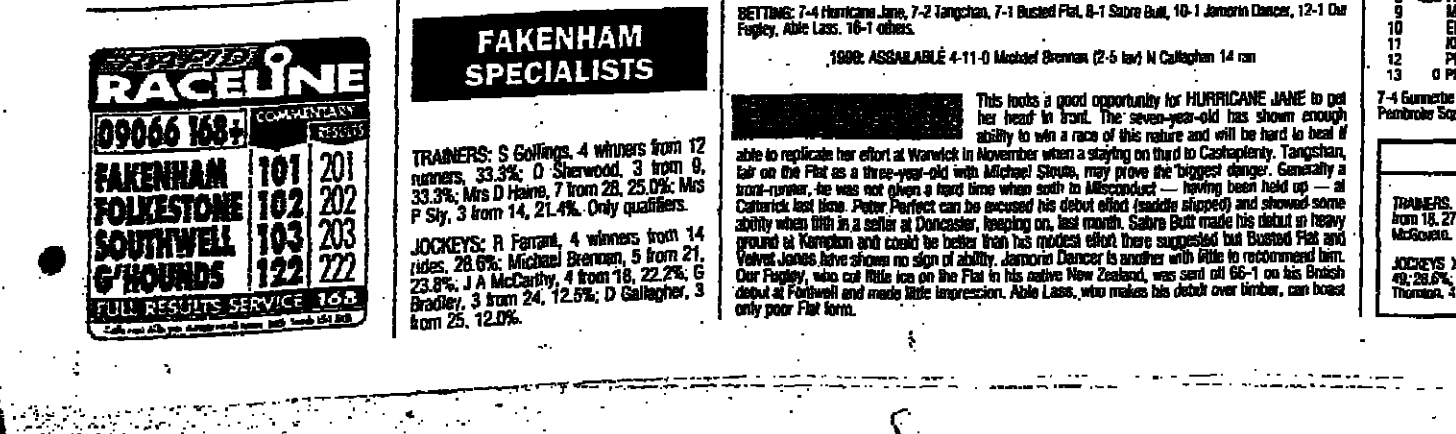
4.50 EDP CHAMPION FOR SPORT CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS MAIDEN HURDLE
(£2,214: 2m) (11 runners)

601 000 BUSTED FLAT 18 (R Burridge) Mrs J Brown 6-11-8 G Lee —
602 DOCTOR HICKS (L Wordingham) L Wordingham 5-11-8 R Massey —
603 0 OUR FUGLEY 11 (P Winkworth) P Winkworth 5-11-8 O McPhail 47
604 05 PETER PERFECT 23 (V) (P Lamyman) Mrs S Lamyman 5-11-8 L Corcoran 45
605 FP-00 VELVET JONES 22F (Mrs J Charles-Jones) G Charles-Jones 6-11-8 L Cooper —
606 ABLE LASS 89F (G Prodromou) G Prodromou 5-11-3 R Wakley —
607 30-F30 HURRICANE JANE 22 (M Roberts) M J Roberts 7-11-3 T Peoples (4) [illegible]
608 153/3/ JUST A MADAM 783P (F) (M Gingell) Mrs A E Johnson 9-11-3 Michael Brennan —
609 -63P56 TANGSHAN 17 (Mrs S Thomson Jones) Mrs D Haine 5-11-3 S Durack 82
610 0P0 JAMORIN DANCER 28 (M Banks) M Banks 4-11-0 R Studholme 34
611 P SABRE BUTT 65 (B) (Raceworld) M Tompkins 4-11-0 D Yellowlees (4) —

BETTING: 7-4 Hurricane Jane, 7-2 Tangshan, 7-1 Busted Flat, 8-1 Sabre Butt, 10-1 Jamorin Dancer, 12-1 Our Fugley, Able Lass, 16-1 others.

1998: ASSAILABLE 4-11-0 Michael Brennan (2-5 fav) N Callaghan 14 ran

This looks a good opportunity for HURRICANE JANE to get her head in front. The seven-year-old has shown enough ability to win a race of this nature and will be hard to beat if able to replicate her effort at Warwick in November when a staying on third to Cashaplenty. Tangshan, fair on the Flat as a three-year-old with Michael Stoute, may prove the biggest danger. Generally a front-runner, he was not given a hard time when sixth to Misconduct — having been held up — at Catterick last time. Peter Perfect can be excused his debut effort (saddle slipped) and showed some ability when fifth in a seller at Doncaster, keeping on, last month. Sabre Butt made his debut in heavy ground at Kempton and could be better than his modest effort there suggested but Busted Flat and Velvet Jones have shown no sign of ability. Jamorin Dancer is another with little to recommend him. Our Fugley, who cut little ice on the Flat in his native New Zealand, was sent off 66-1 on his British debut at Fontwell and made little impression. Able Lass, who makes his debut over timber, can boast only poor Flat form.



FAKENHAM SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: S Gollings, 4 winners from 12 runners, 33.3%; O Sherwood, 3 from 9, 33.3%; Mrs D Haine, 7 from 28, 25.0%; Mrs P Sly, 3 from 14, 21.4%. Only qualifiers.

JOCKEYS: R Farrant, 4 winners from 14 rides, 28.6%; Michael Brennan, 5 from 21, 23.8%; J A McCarthy, 4 from 18, 22.2%; G Bradley, 3 from 24, 12.5%; D Gallagher, 3 from 25, 12.0%.

FOLKESTONE

ROB WRIGHT

2.00 Inclination. 2.30 Montroe. 3.00 PALATIAL (nap). 3.30 Buckland Lad. 4.00 Sorbiere. 4.30 Secret Bid. 5.00 Gunnerbe Posh.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (GOOD IN PLACES) SIS

2.00 HOSPICE ON THE HILL MARES ONLY CLAIMING HURDLE
(£1,784: 2m 1f 110yd) (12 runners)

1 02 LITTLE MISS LUCY 24 M Heaton-Ellis 5-11-9 B Powell 26
2 6350 MISS ONDEE 100 (D,F,G,S) M Pipe 5-11-3 A P McCoy [illegible]
3 0500 SILVERY 11 (V) S Woodman 5-11-3 R Thornton 47
4 00/ ILLEGALLY YOURS 428F L Montague Hall 6-11-0 L Aspell —
5 402P INCLINATION 11 (CD,S) Mrs L Jewell 5-11-0 Mr S Stronge (7) 90
6 00 MISS SCARLETT 25 Mrs P Tatley 6-11-0 J Goldstein (3) —
7 400 MONTAGNETTE 15 M R Bosley 5-11-0 G Tormey 26
8 0-00 TAKETHETOPOFF 119 J King 6-11-0 L Cummins (3) 62
9 44-0 SIFWA 23 D O'Brien 5-10-11 M Batchelor (5) 54
10 50 LITTLE ELEANOR 32 G L Moore 4-10-9 P Hide —
11 55-0 LITTLE MISS ROCKER 178 (D,F) R Head 5-10-8 R Johnson —
12 F46 MISS SCOOTER 55F M Muggeridge 4-10-3 D Creech (7) 65

6-4 Miss Ondee, 4-1 Little Miss Lucy, 9-2 Inclination, 11-2 Miss Scooter, 10-1 Sifwa, 16-1 Takethetopoff, 20-1 Montagnette, 25-1 others.

2.30 HOSPICE ON THE HILL NOVICES CHASE
(£3,948: 3m 2f) (6)

1 30U2 WOODLANDS BEAU 18 (F,G,S) R Alner 7-11-10 A Thornton 115
2 06P3 CORN EXCHANGE 8 (F,G) D Duggan 11-11-3 H Oliver (5) 32
3 P453 EDGE AHEAD 18 (B) Mrs D Haine 9-11-3 G Tormey —
4 6202 MONTROE 30 (G,S) R Rowe 7-11-3 R Dunwoody [illegible]
5 /4FP ROYAL RAVEN 16 (G) J Gifford 8-11-3 L Aspell 77
6 11R- UP THE COUNTRY 319P (S) R Curtis 7-11-3 C Llewellyn —

11-10 Woodlands Beau, 7-4 Montroe, 6-1 Royal Raven, 10-1 Up The Country, 16-1 Corn Exchange, 25-1 Edge Ahead

3.00 HOSPICE ON THE HILL NOVICES HURDLE
(£2,488: 2m 1f 110yd) (10)

1 2613 PIETRO BEMBO 13 (BF,S) J Akehurst 5-11-9 T J Murphy [illegible]
2 005/ MR WILD 666F T D McCarthy 6-11-2 O Burrows (5) —
3 POLISH LEGION 31F J Akehurst 6-11-2 C Llewellyn —
4 66- ROSS TOWN 503 J Jenkins 6-11-2 M Griffiths (5) —
5 0/0 YOUNG MAZAAD 100F D O'Brien 6-11-2 W Marston —
6 0P BLUE CHIP 52 T M Jones 6-10-11 B Powell —
7 315 EDWARDA 125 (S) M Pipe 4-10-10 A P McCoy 104
8 LIGHTNING STAR 293F R Stronge 4-10-8 Mr S Stronge (7) —
9 06 TEMUJIN 95 D O'Brien 4-10-8 M Batchelor (5) —
10 2 PALATIAL 22 (BF) Mrs D Haine 4-10-3 G Tormey 45

7-4 Pietro Bembo, 9-4 Palatial, 11-4 Edwarda, 10-1 Lightning Star, 12-1 Polish Legion, 25-1 Ross Town, 33-1 Mr Wild, 50-1 others

3.30 HOSPICE ON THE HILL HANDICAP CHASE
(£3,623: 2m) (6)

1 2141 BUCKLAND LAD 14 (CD,F,S) D Grissell 8-11-11 N Williamson 119
2 34-F GIPSY GEOF 22 (D,G,S) G Hubbard 8-11-11 R Thornton 116
3 5853 COOLTEEN HERO 13 (D,G,S) R Alner 9-11-9 R Widger (5) 120
4 2414 FERRERS 28 (D,G,S) Mrs P Sly 8-11-9 W Marston 119
5 P2FP DENICHEUR 16 (G) Mrs L Taylor 8-10-13 T J Murphy [illegible]
6 -0FP UPWARD SURGE 94 (D,F) R Ledger 9-10-0 Mrs N Ledger —

6-4 Buckland Lad, 2-1 Ferrers, 4-1 Coolteen Hero, 6-1 Gipsy Geof, 20-1 Denicheur, 66-1 Upward Surge.

4.00 HOSPICE ON THE HILL HANDICAP HURDLE
(£1,815: 2m 6f 110yd) (10)

1 1P44 DOUBLE STRIKE 13 (S) Mrs P Sly 8-11-11 W Marston 93
2 3166 MILLMOUNT 23 (CD,G,S) T McGovern 9-11-8 B Powell 98
3 4244 FOUNTAIN BID 4 (G) R Dean 7-11-2 J Goldstein (3) 92
4 6035 MONKS SOHAM 23 (G,S) G Hubbard 11-11-2 R Thornton [illegible]
5 2064 AINSI SOIT IL 13 (B,CD,G,S) G McCourt 8-11-0 D Forth (3) 97
6 P-P0 SALAMAN 32 (CD,F) D O'Brien 7-10-12 A P McCoy 70
7 0-06 TUKANO 11F (F) J Jenkins 8-10-10 M Griffiths (5) —
8 0-34 SMOKEY ROBOT 30 Miss S Edwards 6-10-5 L Aspell 55
9 3310 SORBIERE 52 (CD,F,S) D Grissell 12-10-5 N Williamson 96
10 P6P6 NORDIC SPREE 94 (V,S) K Vincent 7-10-0 M Batchelor (5) —

7-2 Monks Soham, 5-1 Millmount, 11-2 Double Strike, 6-1 Sorbiere, 7-1 Ainsi Soit Il, 8-1 Fountain Bid, Salaman, 10-1 others.

4.30 HOSPICE ON THE HILL HANDICAP CHASE
(£2,469: 3m 2f) (12)

1 20P3 CHURCH LAW 63 (G,S) Mrs L Taylor 12-11-10 T J Murphy [illegible]
2 6-62 PUNTERS BAR 89 (G,S) P Bowen 12-11-6 W Marston 103
3 -250 FORTUNES COURSE 13 (D,F,G,S) J King 10-11-6 L Cummins (3) 94
4 PPP0 DENVER BAY 22 (C,F,S) J Gifford 12-11-0 L Aspell —
5 4443 SECRET BID 94 (CD,F,G) R Alner 9-10-12 A Thornton 106
6 1F23 TOTAL JOY 22 (G,S) C Mann 8-10-12 R Dunwoody 110
7 232F BLAZING STORM 28 (B,G) C Egerton 7-10-3 N Williamson —
8 FF30 BLACK SPRING 52 (G) R Rowe 7-10-0 B Powell 42
9 0455 GLEN OAK 93 (C,G,S) D Duggan 14-10-0 H Oliver (5) 100
10 -6UF GREY GORDEN 99 (G,S) T McGovern 11-10-0 X Aizpuru (3) 108
11 33P5 POLO PONY 28 (B,F,G,S) J Upson 7-10-0 J Supple 102
12 -P3P BUBBLES GALORE 30 T D McCarthy 8-10-0 O Burrows (5) —

11-4 Total Joy, 5-1 Secret Bid, 11-2 Blazing Storm, 7-1 Church Law, Punters Bar, Polo Pony, 10-1 Fortunes Course, 14-1 others.

5.00 H.B.L.B. HOSPICE ON THE HILL MAIDEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE
(£1,578: 2m 1f 110yd) (13)

1 322 BROCKTON GLEN 30 R Buckler 6-11-8 B Powell 83
2 2 GUNNERBE POSH 13 N Chance 5-11-8 N Mulholland (7) [illegible]
3 I SAY BOB G Hubbard 5-11-8 R Thornton —
4 MISTER DOON Miss S Edwards 6-11-8 L Aspell —
5 0 PAPATUU 34 C Mann 5-11-8 C Rafter (7) 42
6 TIME STOOD STILL Mrs J Ewer 6-11-8 Miss C Dyson —
7 36 TOREO 28 J Dunlop 5-11-8 Mr H Dunlop (7) 85
8 406 RFI 28 John Berry 5-11-3 S Kelly (5) 58
9 MONALIGHTER R Stronge 5-11-3 Mr S Stronge (7) —
10 EL MONTY R Alner 4-11-0 A Thornton —
11 KING OF THE CASTLE Mrs J Pitman 4-11-0 R Dunwoody —
12 PEARLY PRINCE G Hubbard 4-11-0 C Honour (7) —
13 0 PEMBROKE SQUARE 39 M Pipe 4-11-0 A P McCoy 45

7-4 Gunnerbe Posh, 5-2 King of The Castle, 9-2 Brockton Glen, 8-1 Toreo, 10-1 Pembroke Square, 20-1 El Monty, Pearly Prince, 25-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: C Egerton, 3 winners from 10 runners, 30.0%; Mrs D Haine, 5 from 18, 27.8%; G McCourt, 3 from 13, 23.1%; M Pipe, 7 from 32, 21.9%; T McGovern, 4 from 20, 20.0%; D Grissell, 11 from 63, 17.5%.

JOCKEYS: X Aizpuru, 3 winners from 7 rides, 42.9%; N Williamson, 14 from 49, 28.6%; A McCoy, 9 from 52, 17.3%; R Dunwoody, 6 from 39, 15.4%; R Thornton, 4 from 27, 14.8%; P Hide, 7 from 58, 12.1%. Only qualifiers.

SOUTHWELL

ROB WRIGHT

1.40 Lady Rachel. 2.10 May King Mayhem. 2.40 Anonym. 3.10 Sea-Belle. 3.40 Cool Secret. 4.10 Rich Ballerina. 4.40 Cantgetyourbreath.

GOING: STANDARD DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE SIS

1.40 ZEUS APPRENTICE HANDICAP
(Div I: £1,612: 1m 4f) (9 runners)

1 1125 MOONRAKING 21 (B,CD) Miss S Wilton 6-9-12 J Savage (5) 2
2 220- LADY RACHEL 167 (BF,D,F,S) J Eyre 4-9-6 D Young (7) 7
3 -355 IKRAM BOY 9 A Bailey 5-8-7 J Bosley (5) 4
4 33-0 REPTON 53 (S) Mrs A Swinbank 4-8-5 D Mernagh (3) 5
5 6311 LOST SPIRIT 13 (CD) P Hiatt 3-8-3 Joanna Badger (7) 1
6 3064 UNITUS 17J (G) M Chapman 6-8-0 S Righton (3) 9
7 -600 CAROL AGAIN 9 (CD) N Bycroft 7-7-11 Kimberley Hart 3
8 /3/2 SHEPHERDS REST 9 S Mellor 7-7-10 Emily Joyce (5) 8
9 1000 ALANA'S CAVALIER 21 (C) R Hollinshead 3-7-10 P M Quinn (5) 6

5-2 Lost Spirit, 9-2 Shepherds Rest, 5-1 Moonraking, 6-1 Lady Rachel, 7-1 Ikram Boy, 8-1 Repton, 10-1 Unitus, 16-1 others.

2.10 ZEUS APPRENTICE HANDICAP
(Div II: £1,612: 1m 4f) (9)

1 1-34 JOHNNIE THE JOKER 11 (B,CD,G) J Leigh 8-9-10 D Hayden (5) 7
2 -051 RIVER CAPTAIN 11 (CD) D Murray Smith 6-9-8 (6ex) P Goode 8
3 -331 WESTERN COMMAND 9 (C) M Prescott 3-8-10 (6ex) R FitzPatrick 2
4 5/09 SAFECRACKER 22J (B,F) T Etherington 6-8-6 P Bradley (3) 1
5 031- MAY KING MAYHEM 165 (B,D,G) Mrs A King 6-8-4 A Nicholls 5
6 -053 KARINSKA 11 (C,F,G,S) M Chapman 9-8-0 S Righton (3) 3
7 -305 APPYABO 18 M Quinn 4-7-13 Emily Joyce (5) 9
8 2305 DOUBLE ECHO 9 (CD,F,G,S) J Bethell 11-7-10 L Gueller (7) 6
9 0000 COPPER COOKIE 39 M Polglase 4-7-10 C Cogan (3) 4

2-1 Western Command, 3-1 River Captain, 6-1 Karinska, 13-2 Johnnie The Joker, 8-1 May King Mayhem, Double Echo, 16-1 Appyabo, 20-1 others.

2.40 HERA CLAIMING STAKES
(£2,194: 1m) (14)

1 0-00 DOMINO FLYER 32 (CD,G,S) Mrs A Swinbank 6-9-12 G Duffield 12
2 3434 KILLARNEY JAZZ 13 (B,CD) G Chung 4-9-11 M Tebbutt 11
3 2/01 BRANDON MAGIC 42 (CD,G,S) D Nicholls 6-9-9 Alex Greaves 13
4 -215 ANONYM 18 (BF,CD,F,G) G M Moore 7-9-8 J Quinn 14
5 1451 KINGCHIP BOY 23 (CD,F,G) M Ryan 10-9-8 P McCabe 7
6 -033 BROCTUNE LINE 11 (CD) Mrs M Reveley 5-9-7 S Copp (5) 8
7 00-0 MOVING PRINCESS 11 Miss S Hall 4-9-7 A McGlone 3
8 0406 ADIRPOUR 11 R Hollinshead 5-9-6 P M Quinn (7) 9
9 0305 SHARP MONKEY 11 (V,CD) Mrs N Macauley 4-9-6 J F Egan 10
10 6324 AWESOME VENTURE 11 (CD,S) M Chapman 9-9-5 S Righton (7) 2
11 0-00 PINE RIDGE LAD 11 (CD,F,G) J L Harris 9-9-5 S Sanders 5
12 0-62 EASTLEIGH 42 (C,D,S) R Hollinshead 10-9-4 A Culhane 4
13 000/ KIND PRINCE 17J R Whitaker 7-9-4 Dean McKeown 6
14 1/0- SUN MARK 13J (G,S) Miss J Craze 8-9-4 S Webster 1

4-1 Killarney Jazz, 9-2 Brandon Magic, 6-1 Broctune Line, 7-1 Kingchip Boy, Moving Princess, 8-1 Anonym, 10-1 Awesome Venture, Eastleigh, 14-1 others.

3.10 APOLLO MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES
(3-Y-O: £2,057: 6f) (8)

1 -032 DOVEDON TIMES 9 R Akbary 9-0 N Day 1
2 000- PRINCE OF ARAGON 156 K Ivory 9-0 Martin Dwyer 2
3 40-0 SO WILLING 32 M Dods 9-0 J Weaver 7
4 060- FLYING MEMORY 277 N Littmoden 8-9 T G McLaughlin 8
5 05-0 RISKY EXPERIENCE 67 (V) B Baugh 8-9 J F Egan 5
6 40-2 SEA-BELLE 23 K Bell 8-9 D Sweeney 4
7 30- SLIGHTLY DUSTY 336 P Evans 8-9 C Cogan (7) 3
8 26-0 TANCRED ARMS 25 D Barker 8-9 T Williams 6

8-11 Sea-Belle, 6-1 Dovedon Times, So Willing, 7-1 Tancred Arms, 10-1 Slightly Dusty, 16-1 Prince Of Aragon, 33-1 others.

3.40 NEPTUNE HANDICAP
(£6,215: 7f) (9)

1 316- ASTRAC 164 (CD,F,S) D Nicholls 8-10-0 Alex Greaves 7
2 1111 SHARP SCOTCH 3 (C,S) D Carroll 6-9-11 (6ex) R FitzPatrick (5) 6
3 1-23 ADELPHI BOY 30 (C) M Chapman 3-9-3 S Righton (7) 5
4 0612 COOL SECRET 11 (C,F) K Burke 4-9-1 J F Egan 1
5 000- TERTIUM 153 (D,F,S) N Littmoden 7-8-12 M Fenton 9
6 2115 WINDSHIFT 11 (V,BF,C) D Shaw 3-8-5 R Winston (3) 2
7 6013 LIVE PROJECT 6 (CD,S) R Craggs 7-8-3 L Charnock 3
8 3826 WAITING KNIGHT 18 (V) Mrs N Macauley 4-8-1 G Duffield 4
9 3443 DAHLIDYA 21 (C) M Polglase 4-7-10 A Polli (3) 8

3-1 Cool Secret, 7-2 Adelphi Boy, 4-1 Sharp Scotch, 7-1 Live Project, 8-1 Astrac, Windshift, 14-1 Tertium, Dahlidya, 20-1 Waiting Knight.

4.10 APHRODITE SELLING STAKES
(3-Y-O: £1,814: 7f) (8)

1 1502 KEEN HANDS 6 (V) Mrs N Macauley 9-4 R Price 4
2 5100 WEET U THERE 8 (D) R Hollinshead 9-4 A Culhane 6
3 6365 LADY CAROLINE 9 M Johnston 8-13 D Holland 2
4 2433 RICH BALLERINA 9 (CD) D Carroll 8-13 R FitzPatrick (5) 8
5 000- NETHERHALL 158 M Meagher 8-12 J Weaver 7
6 3604 E B PEARL 9 N Bycroft 8-7 Martin Dwyer 1
7 0-60 PASHA 16 Miss J Craze 8-7 T Williams 3
8 SUNLEY SOLAIRE M Channon 8-7 S Sanders 5

9-4 Rich Ballerina, 5-2 Keen Hands, 9-2 Weet U There, 6-1 E B Pearl, 8-1 Lady Caroline, 12-1 Sunley Solaire, 20-1 Pasha, 33-1 Netherhall.

4.40 ACHILLES HANDICAP
(3-Y-O: £3,631: 6f) (10)

1 5342 POLLY MILLS 27 (B,C,S) P Evans 9-7 J F Egan 2
2 406- APRIL ACE 149 (D,S) M Quinn 9-0 A Mackay 9
3 3111 IRISH CREAM 16 (V,CD,S) A Reid 9-0 J Weaver 7
4 106- RED CHARGER 173 (D,F,G) D Nicholls 8-12 F Norton 4
5 30-1 ASHOVER AMBER 25 (CD) T Barron 8-8 O Pears 10
6 4034 CANTGETYOURBREATH 13 (V,CD) Mrs N Macauley 8-8 Amanda Sanders 5
7 008- MILADY LILLIE 248 K Ivory 8-4 Martin Dwyer 1
8 0211 SOUNDS LUCKY 13 (D) N Littmoden 8-2 J Tate 6
9 06-2 MUDDY WATER 65 D Marks 7-12 J Quinn 8
10 008- RICH DOMINION 143 J Bethell 7-10 L Charnock 3

3-1 Ashover Amber, 7-2 Irish Cream, 5-1 Sounds Lucky, 6-1 Polly Mills, 8-1 Muddy Water, 10-1 Red Charger, Cantgetyourbreath, 14-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: Miss S Hall, 5 winners from 9 runners, 55.6%; Sir M Prescott, 27 from 86, 31.4%; Miss S Wilton, 12 from 43, 27.9%; K Bell, 3 from 11, 27.3%; D Carroll, 5 from 25, 20.0%; M Johnston, 43 from 222, 19.4%.

JOCKEYS: R FitzPatrick, 9 winners from 32 rides, 28.1%; N Day, 8 from 38, 21.1%; Kimberley Hart, 11 from 55, 20.0%; D Holland, 23 from 118, 19.5%; J Weaver, 37 from 231, 16.0%; M Tebbutt, 12 from 80, 15.0%.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: 2.00 Silvery.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Cheltenham

Going: good to soft (good in places)

2.00 (2m 1f hdle) 1, **KATARINO** (M A Fitzgerald, 11-4 fav); 2, **Balla Sola** (R Walsh, 16-1); 3, **Afarad** (C F Swan, 8-1); 4, **Dangerus Precedent** (N Williamson, 9-1). ALSO RAN: 8 Knife Edge, Simply Gifted, 16 Ballysicyos (5th), Frozen Groom, Scarlet Pimpernel (6th). 25 Nuvellino, 28 Miss Orphan, 40 Comache, Empeus, 66 Miss Fara, New Bird, Street Fighter, 100 Charlie's Gold, Piped Aboard, The Gene Genie, 150 Imshishway, Inner Light, Take A Turn (f), 200 Incepla. 23 ran. 8l, 1½l, 2l, 5l, ½l. N Henderson at Lambourn. Tote: £3.60; £1.60, £4.00, £2.10, £1.80. DF: £51.00. CSF: £37.90. Tricast: £288.30.

2.35 (3m 110yd hdle) 1, **ANZUM** (R Johnson, 40-1); 2, **Le Coudray** (C F Swan, 2-1 jt-fav); 3, **Lady Rebecca** (N Williamson, 3-1). ALSO RAN: 2-1 jt-fav Deano's Beeno, 16 Go-Informal, 25 Sallie's Girl (4th), 33 Juyush (5th), Paddy's Return (6th), Turnpole, 50 Kerawi, 66 Lord Jim, Ocean Hawk. 12 ran. Nk, 2½l, 5l, 6l, 8l. D Nicholson at Temple Guiting. Tote: £62.40; £7.20, £1.50, £1.50. DF: £95.40. CSF: £107.91. Tricast: £303.00.

3.15 (3m 2f 110yd ch) 1, **SEE MORE BUSINESS** (M A Fitzgerald, 16-1); 2, **Go Ballistic** (A Dobbin, 66-1); 3, **Florida Pearl** (R Dunwoody, 5-2 fav). ALSO RAN: 7-2 Teeton Mill, 11-2 Dorans Pride, 9 Double Thriller (4th), Escartefigue, 14 Suny Bay, Unsinkable Boxer, 20 Simply Dashing (6th), 50 Senor El Betrutti, 66 Addington Boy (5th). 12 ran. NR: Imperial Call. 1l, 17l, 14l, 3½l, 12l. P Nicholls at Shepton Mallet. Tote: £14.40; £2.90, £5.90, £2.00. DF: £216.60. Trifecta: £4,033.90. CSF: £659.57. Tricast: £3,163.34.

3.55 (3m 2f 110yd ch) 1, **Castle Mane** (Mr B Pollock, 9-2); 2, Elegant Lord (3-1 fav); 3, Last Option (20-1). 24 ran. 13l, 1¼l. Mrs C Bailey. Tote: £4.30; £2.40, £1.90, £5.80. DF: £7.90. CSF: £15.67. Tricast: £243.62.

4.30 (3m 110yd ch) 1, **Space Trucker** (J R Barry, 7-2 fav); 2, Dines (6-1); 3, Hurricane Lamp (16-1). 15 ran. 1½l, 1l. Mrs J Harrington. Tote: £3.90; £1.80, £2.00, £7.20. DF: £8.10. CSF: £22.48. Tricast: £277.14.

5.05 (2m 5f ch) 1, **Stormyfairweather** (M A Fitzgerald, 9-1); 2, Nik Dee (14-1); 3, Edelweis du Moulin (5-1). Dr Leunt (5th) 11-4 fav. 10 ran. NR: Bengers Moor, High Express, Nick Dundee. 2l, hd. N Henderson. Tote: £9.00; £1.60, £2.70, £1.90. DF: £57.90. CSF: £105.82. Tricast: £640.21.

5.40 (2m 1f hdle) 1, **Sir Talbot** (T J Murphy, 10-1); 2, Decoupage (100-30 fav); 3, Toto Toscato (25-1); 4, Sadler's Realm (25-1). 28 ran. NR: Barna Boy, Kathryn's Pet. 6l, 10l. J Old. Tote: £11.40; £2.90, £1.70, £9.90, £6.30. DF: £20.30. Trifecta: £3,964.60. CSF: £33.16. Tricast: £798.38.

Jackpot: £233,095.80 (0.1 winning tickets. Pool of £295,473.62 carried forward to Fakenham today).

Placepot: £179.90. Quadpot: £54.80.

Hexham

Going: soft (heavy in places)

2.25 (2m 110yd ch) 1, **Charmwood Jack** (B Harding, 4-5 fav); 2, Turkish Tower (11-4); 3, Howyoudoing (6-1). 6 ran. 3½l, 2l. M Todhunter. Tote: £1.60; £1.40, £1.80. DF: £2.50. CSF: £3.49.

3.00 (3m hdle) 1, **Quick March** (N Horrocks, 1-4 fav); 2, Hart Lodge (14-1); 3, Ansaig (12-1). 7 ran. 7l, 26l. E Weymes. Tote: £1.30; £1.20, £1.60. DF: £3.10. CSF: £6.24.

3.35 (4m ch) 1, **Pink Gin** (R Wilkinson, 7-1); 2, Cadrillon (10-1); 3, Kibby Bank (9-1). Swanbister 5-4 fav. 8 ran. 14l, 13l. M Meagher. Tote: £11.50; £2.00, £4.60, £1.70. DF: £40.70. CSF: £67.38. Tricast: £589.20.

4.15 (2m hdle) 1, **Double Buck** (D O'Sullivan, 10-1); 2, Apollo's Daughter (4-1); 3, Madge McSplash (11-8 fav). 5 ran. 1½l, ½l. W Kemp. Tote: £14.80; £2.80, £2.10. DF: £35.20. CSF: £42.45.

4.50 (2m 4f 110yd ch) 1, **Dook's Delight** (A S Smith, 14-1); 2, Santa Jet (evens fav); 3, Falcons Flame (7-1). 10 ran. NR: Carley Lad, Cullane Lake. 1l, 3½l. R Fahey. Tote: £30.80; £3.50, £1.10, £2.40. DF: £15.20. CSF: £28.92. Tricast: £113.77.

5.25 (3m hdle) 1, **Zamhareer** (N Horrocks, 4-1); 2, Five Flags (4-1); 3, D'Arblay Street (5-1). 6 ran. ½l, 24l. R Ford. Tote: £4.10; £2.30, £4.00. DF: £10.20. CSF: £19.17.

Placepot: £59.00. Quadpot: £35.70.

Lingfield Park

Going: standard

1.50 (1m) 1, **Statistician** (Mr A Evans, 11-4 fav); 2, Dark Menace (10-1); 3, Katil (12-1). 12 ran. ¾l, hd. John Berry. Tote: £4.40; £2.10, £4.80, £3.10. DF: £60.50. CSF: £35.38. Tricast: £296.63.

2.20 (7f) 1, **Anokato** (Dean McKeown, 9-2); 2, Speedy Classic (9-4 fav); 3, Best Quest (9-1). 13 ran. ¾l, 9l. Mrs N Macauley. Tote: £5.50; £2.40, £1.10, £2.10. DF: £7.10. CSF: £14.00.

2.55 (6f) 1, **Palacegate Touch** (P Bradley, 5-2); 2, Krystal Max (evens fav); 3, Mutasawwar (16-1). 8 ran. 1l, 1½l. J Berry. Tote: £4.10; £1.60, £1.00, £3.10. DF: £2.20. CSF: £5.21.

3.30 (5f) 1, **Tear White** (T Quinn, 3-1); 2, Friendly Brave (6-1); 3, Soaked (7-4 fav). 9 ran. 1½l, nk. T Mills. Tote: £4.30; £2.40, £1.80, £1.70. DF: £15.90. CSF: £23.09. Tricast: £40.03.

4.10 (1m 2f) 1, **Scraggys Dream** (R Cochrane, 9-4 fav); 2, Thekryaati (5-2); 3, Ki Chi Saga (8-1). 12 ran. 1½l, 3l. P Mitchell. Tote: £2.80; £1.60, £1.70, £1.60. DF: £6.70. CSF: £9.06. Tricast: £43.18.

4.40 (1m 4f) 1, **Banbury** (J Gotobed, 5-2); 2, Space Race (11-4); 3, Sheer Native (5-4 fav). 4 ran. NR: Martha Reilly. 3l, 1½l. C Dwyer. Tote: £4.40. DF: £7.00. CSF: £8.72.

5.15 (1m) 1, **Walkiki Beach** (Mr B Hitchcott, 12-1); 2, Denbras (7-2); 3, Melomania (12-1). Gadge (4th) 5-2 fav. 12 ran. 5l, 8l. G L Moore. Tote: £13.80; £2.90, £1.20, £6.50. DF: £12.00. CSF: £51.25. Tricast: £501.86.

Placepot: £43.30. Quadpot: £6.60.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: XAIPETE (3.50 Fakenham)

FOOTBALL

Scotland turn to Hutchison in gamble for goals

BY PHIL GORDON

SCOTLAND'S search for a goalscorer has earned Don Hutchison, of Everton, a place in the squad for the European championship qualifying games with Bosnia Herzegovina and the Czech Republic later this month.

Hutchison, 27, seems certain to make his international debut in one of the two games, to be played in Glasgow on March 27 and 31, his call-up by Craig Brown, the national coach, coming as a reward for his form this season at Goodison Park, where he has been press-ganged into filling a striker's role.

Goals are as scarce for Everton, the FA Carling Premiership's lowest scorers, as Scotland and Brown has been stripped of the three forwards who played in the World Cup in France. Kevin Gallacher, Gordon Durie and Darren Jackson's have all finished the season early because of injuries. The casualty list extends to central defence, where Colin Hendry, of Rangers, is unavailable, prompting the introduction of Paul Ritchie, of Heart of Midlothian.

Intriguingly, Hendry's predecessor as national captain, Gary McAllister, returns to the international stage after knee surgery and the match with Bosnia, at Ibrox Stadium, will be his first for Scotland since November 1997, when he played against France in St Etienne.

However, it is the problem of overcoming the severe goal shortage — just five in the three games so far, against the lightweights of Lithuania, Estonia and the Faroe Islands — that vexes Brown.

"We are badly off for strikers," he said yesterday. "It is alarming to have no one who is recognised in that position, because in home games, you need goals. You cannot sit back. It's made worse by the fact that the only one we have left to call on, Billy Dodds, has to miss the Bosnia game through suspension."

Brown has watched Hutchison recently and obtained good reports from Premiership managers, apart from Walter Smith at Everton. "Don is not prolific," Brown said, "He is more of a provider, but hopefully he can do the job for us."

Hutchison made one appearance for the Scotland B team in Wales four years ago while he was at Liverpool, but his career hit a nadir at Anfield before he moved on to West Ham United and Sheffield United and then, last season, Everton.

"I will be looking for goals from our midfield. Craig Burley and David Hopkin have done it for us before, while Eoin Jess has scored 13 for Aberdeen this season from just behind the attack," Smith said.

That plea to the playmakers may help to inspire McAllister on his return at the age of 34. Before the cruciate ligament injury that kept him out of the World Cup, some supporters were demanding that he be pensioned off.

"McAllister is there on merit, not sentiment," Brown said. "I have seen him twice for Coventry recently and he has been outstanding. Real football people appreciate McAllister. If he had been English, Howard Wilkinson would have had him in the team against France recently, so highly does he think of Gary.

"I never wrote him off after his injury but I was afraid he might not be able to attain the level of fitness required. But I would love to see him at Euro 2000 to make up for missing the World Cup.."

As expected, Andy Goram did not receive the call even though Brown has picked four goalkeepers.

"These are two important games for us, especially the Czech one, and it was in the interests of Andy, and the squad, that they stayed focused on footballl," Brown said.

SCOTLAND SQUAD: D Douglas (Dundee), J Gould (Celtic), A Main (St Johnstone), N Sullivan (Wimbledon), T Boyd (Celtic), C Davidson (Blackburn Rovers), M Elliott (Leicester City), P Ritchie (Hearts), D Weir (Everton), D Whyte (Aberdeen), C Burley (Celtic), I Durrant (Kilmarnock), B Ferguson (Rangers), D Hopkin (Leeds Utd), A Johnston (Sunderland), P Lambert (Celtic), G McAllister (Coventry City), J McNamara (Celtic), B Dodds (Dundee Utd), D Hutchison (Everton), E Jess (Aberdeen), N McCann (Rangers)


McAllister: proved fitness


Hutchison: scoring role


Keane, top, towers above Scholes, the goalscorer, as Manchester United players celebrate the late strike that secured a 1-1 draw in the San Siro stadium

United benefit from bitter experience

FROM MATT DICKINSON IN MILAN

THERE WAS a sense about Alex Ferguson on Wednesday night that his team had completed the hard part, that if the European Cup was an obstacle course then Manchester United had just scaled the giant wall.

The presence in the semi-final draw this afternoon of Dynamo Kiev, Bayern Munich and Juventus — three giants of the game in any generation — would suggest quite the opposite, but one knew exactly what the United manager meant. In knocking out the mighty Internazionale, his young team had slayed the ogre in their own minds. They had proved to Europe, but most importantly to themselves, that an English team could overcome an Italian one. "You trust the players," the United manager said, "and perhaps now they trust themselves."

United had never before knocked a side from Serie A out of Europe. Indeed, on six previous visits to the country, they had returned as losers every time and there were times at a raucous, rowdy San Siro when it seemed that the Italian grip might throttle them once more.

As Zanetti hit the post and the ear drums were assaulted by a succession of screams for a penalty, United must have gone through the concerns that had cost them so dearly in the two years before, when against Borussia Dortmund and then AS Monaco, they had been knocked out by teams of greater belief rather than ability. They were novices stuttering along in a new language.

Now their eloquence is admired throughout the Continent and, while they can be a little loose-tongued as they toy with disaster, they have a sense of confidence and certainty in their work that is the benefit of years of experience, as they proved in the 1-1 second leg draw. While the arrival of Dwight Yorke and Jaap Stam has improved the side, just as vital is that the likes of David Beckham, Gary Neville and Ryan Giggs have now played at least 30 matches in this competition.

One could argue that it has taken them a long time for them to learn their lessons, but at least they have learnt them well. "We have learnt from previous years," Peter Schmeichel, the United goalkeeper, said. "The way we went out against Dortmund and Monaco was down to our own mistakes. We can look back and say that was definitely not the way to do it. Now if the opposition are going to score, they have to do something special to beat us. Every area of the pitch is covered by a high-class player so we are reaching the point where we are there."

They have grown to cope with everything that can be thrown at them even when it includes, as it did at the San Siro, a supermarket load of citrus fruit. Oranges were pelted at them before, during and after the game, and there was also some predictable hurling of bodies from the Italian side. Not surprisingly, Ferguson thought the French referee was wonderful as he ignored Schmeichel's collision with Zamorano.

"We knew they would intimidate us and try to get us sent off," Roy Keane, the United midfield player, said, "but you saw when one of their players struck Becks in the face with a ball how we have come through the learning process. It is hard to take, but Becks just walked away." Their composure was to be admired, but equally daunting tests await in the semi-finals when United supporters may find themselves in the unusual position of praying to be paired with Juventus.

Beaten three times out of four by Juventus in the past three seasons, United are now far from fearful of facing a side that has stumbled through the competition, shedding its coach, Marcello Lippi, on the way. Only an 85th minute equaliser against Olympiakos in Athens on Wednesday ensured their passage through, and even a team containing Zidane, Deschamps, Davids and Inzaghi appears out of sync.

Bayern Munich's 6-0 rout of Kaiserslautern over two legs would suggest that they are to be avoided, but United know that they can match the Germans. They drew twice against them in the group phase and only a last-minute rush of blood by Schmeichel cost them victory in Germany.

Which leaves Kiev, a technically wonderful side whose 2-0 victory over Real Madrid on Wednesday proved once again the threat of Schevchenko, possibly the most feared striker in the world, given that Ronaldo is a shadow of himself at present. He may need an operation on his aching knees, but there are rumours in Milan that doctors are not queuing up to operate on him because of the terrible responsibility. It is a horrifying situation for a 22-year-old of such breathtaking talent, but United could be forgiven this week for not giving the Brazilian a second thought.

Strachan fears for safety of players

■ GORDON STRACHAN, the Coventry City manager, fears for the safety of his three players — Barry Quinn and Barry Ferguson, both Irish, and Tynan Scope, an Australian goalkeeper — who have been picked for the Fifa Under-20 world championship in Nigeria that begins in a fortnight. Strachan, worried about possible terrorist attacks, said: "If my son had been picked, I would hope I could change his mind. Sometimes it is braver to be a coward."

■ Derby County have turned down a £4 million bid from Blackburn Rovers for Lee Carsley, the midfield player. Blackburn, who are eager to add to their midfield resources before the transfer deadline, are expected to make one more offer for Carsley, although Derby's £5.5m valuation could prevent any deal going ahead.

■ Keith O'Neill completed a £700,000 move from Norwich City to Middlesbrough last night and goes straight into the squad at Nottingham Forest tomorrow. Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough

FOOTBALL IN BRIEF

manager, said: "He's strong and quick and, given a good run, I believe he will develop into an excellent player for us."

■ Ronnie Ekelund wants to return to Southampton. The 25-year-old Denmark international, who scored five goals in 17 league appearances for Southampton after moving from Barcelona on loan in 1995, is now with OB Odense, of the second division in Denmark.

■ Darren Eadie, Norwich City's former England Under-21 winger, is likely to be out for the rest of the season after undergoing an operation on Wednesday to cure a knee problem. Eadie, 23, valued at £5 million, had hoped to be back in action by the end of the month.

■ The Football Association may hold an inquiry into the FA Youth Cup tie between Arsenal and Crystal Palace on Wednesday, in which five players were sent off and a mass brawl took place. Arsenal won the match 1-0.

SNOW REPORTS

SKI CLUB

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Conditions Piste	Conditions Runs to Resort	Conditions Off/p	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
Austria								
Kitzbühel	40	165	Good	Slushy	Heavy	Sun	-3	11/3
Obergurgl	50	280	Good	Open	Varied	Fine	-1	8/3
Söll	60	160	Fair	Slushy	Heavy	Sun	-6	7/3
St Anton	80	470	Good	Slushy	Spring	Sun	-5	8/3
France								
Alpe d'Huez	149	340	Hard	Open	Spring	Sun	-1	8/3
Argentiere	80	260	Good	Hard	Spring	Sun	5	8/3
Avoriaz	230	250	Fair	Hard	Varied	Fine	1	8/3
Flaine	125	515	Good	Hard	Varied	Sun	5	8/3
La Clusaz	65	280	Fair	Slushy	Spring	Sun	0	8/3
La Plagne	155	250	Fair	Open	Varied	Fair	3	8/3
La Tania	105	250	Fair	Slushy	Spring	Sun	3	8/3
Les Arcs	142	325	Fair	Open	Varied	Fair	5	8/3
Megeve	90	275	Fair	Slushy	Spring	Sun	0	6/3
Méribel	80	248	Fair	Slushy	Spring	Sun	3	9/3
Tignes	146	260	Hard	Hard	Varied	Sun	-1	8/3
Val Thorens	150	300	Fair	Open	Varied	Sun	0	8/3
Val d'Isere	100	280	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	-7	10/3
Italy								
Cervinia	140	210	Good	Open	Crusty	Fine	1	11/3
Cortina	60	125	Fair	Worn	Spring	Sun	4	7/3
Livigno	76	195	Good	Hard	Varied	Fine	0	8/3
Switzerland								
Crans Montana	50	290	Good	Hard	Varied	Fair	-2	8/3
Davos	145	295	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	0	7/3
Grindelwald	20	250	Good	Hard	Heavy	Fine	6	6/3
Klosters	90	290	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	0	9/3
Murren	90	350	Good	Open	Spring	Fine	5	6/3
Saas Fee	80	215	Good	Artificial	Spring	Sun	3	11/3
St Moritz	70	120	Good	Hard	Varied	Fine	2	6/3
Verbier	70	180	Hard	Slushy	Spring	Sun	-1	11/3
Villars	50	220	Good	Hard	Spring	Sun	-2	8/3
Wengen	70	150	Good	Open	Spring	Fine	3	6/3
United States								
Aspen	135	158	Good	Open	Varied	Fine	3	13/3
Deer Valley	228	255	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	0	12/3

http://www.skiclub.co.uk L = lower slopes. U = upper slopes

Ginola savours special moment

BY ANDREW WARSHAW AND CHRIS MOORE

FEW players, even in their mother tongue, can keep an audience of journalists hanging on their every word for the best part of half an hour. David Ginola can do it in a foreign language.

Yesterday, media day at the Tottenham Hotspur training ground ahead of the Worthington Cup final against Leicester City on Sunday, the mercurial Frenchman, looking every inch the contented, relaxed footballer, held court.

He talked about everything: his goal against Barnsley, his past, his future, life under George Graham and the final, Tottenham's first Wembley final appearance for eight years.

"There are moments you treasure for the rest of your career, moments that don't come along often even if you play for 30 years," Ginola said. "After scoring against Barnsley, I knew I had done something unusual. You don't often see a player pick up the ball on the halfway line and dribble past four opponents. I would be pleased if I saw kids trying the same thing."

Ginola rarely takes the credit for anything alone, always paying tribute to his colleagues. Yet his belief in his ability is abundantly clear. "It was a horrible pitch at Barnsley and a horrible crowd. What I did shows that I don't have to play on a beautiful surface or in front of my own fans to do the same thing. I'm not saying I can do it again on Sunday, especially if there are a couple of players permanently on my back. But if the team win 1-0 and gets into Europe, I'll be happy."

Ginola is particularly proud of having convinced the sceptics that he could work for one of the game's renowned disciplinarians and, before Graham's arrival, that he could play in an unsuccessful side.

"I have proved I can work with anyone," he said. "I think I have also proved that, even in a bad situation like last season, I could be positive, that I could cope with playing in a struggling side. I knew when I signed that we were not at the same level as Arsenal or Manchester United, but I always believed I would be successful at Tottenham."

Spurs fans will be delighted to know that when his contract terminates in two years' time, staying at White Hart Lane is his priority. "I'm sure there will be a lot of proposals," he said. "But my first choice would be Tottenham and I will be making that known."

Martin O'Neill, the Leicester manager, fears the threat of Ginola. He believes that the Spurs winger has been motivated back to his best form after being left out of the France squad that lifted the World Cup last summer.

"When you are looking for 22 Frenchmen, I can't believe that Ginola was not in their World Cup squad," O'Neill said. "There's no question they had an outstanding group of super-talented players. But I can't understand how Bernard Diomeda, for example, was preferred ahead of him."


Ginola: praise for others

O'Neill worked alongside Ginola as a television pundit during France 98 and recognised his hurt. "He kept a stiff upper lip," O'Neill said. "But I got very close to him and could sense how sad and downhearted he really was."

O'Neill is still agonising over whether to man-mark Ginola on Sunday. Two years ago, when Leicester won the competition by beating Middlesbrough in a replayed final, O'Neill used Pontus Kaamark, his Sweden international, to shadow successfully Juninho in both matches.

"Juninho was playing brilliantly at the time and I'm not surprised people are making comparisons with Ginola," O'Neill said. "But the two of them play in different positions and I'm not so sure it's so straightforward to man-mark Ginola, especially when he's flitting from one side of the field to the other.

"In any case, the way he's playing, I think he's clever enough to wangle his way out of any situation."

Taunton cling to glimmer of hope

NON-LEAGUE FOOTBALL BY WALTER GAMMIE

TAUNTON TOWN know they must throw caution to the wind to overcome the 3-0 deficit from the first leg of the FA Carlsberg Vase semi-final before an all-ticket crowd at Tiverton Town tomorrow.

The stunning defeat inflicted by the Vase holders rocked a side that had twice beaten their rivals in Screwfix Direct League matches this season while sprinting clear at the top in a 25-match unbeaten run.

"We've left ourselves a mountain to climb but we won't give up hope as an early goal could be vital," Russell Musker, the Taunton manager, said. "Scoring isn't usually a problem for us. Indeed, last Saturday was only the second time in more than 40 matches this season in which we have failed to score."

Martyn Rogers, the Tiverton manager, felt his team profited from going into the first match as underdogs. "The lads had taken a bit of flack following the league result a few weeks ago," he said. "As a result they were motivated and raring to go for the first leg, which meant I had 11 players operating very close to their full potential. There is no way we're going to sit back so we'll approach the match in the same manner as we approached the first. If we do score, we'll have a great opportunity to kill it off."

If Taunton feel they have a glimmer of hope, Thame United must be ready to bow to the inevitable when they take on Bedlington Terriers at Windmill Road.

A hat-trick by John Milner and two goals by Richie Bond, a substitute, gave the Arnott Insurance Northern League side a 5-0 win in the home leg and Keith Perry, the Bedlington manager, was surely guilty of understatement when he said: "We are in the driving seat."

The £20,000 guaranteed to semi-finalists in the FAW Premier Cup eluded Merthyr Tydfil under Rober Gibbins, their new manager, when they lost 1-0 at Barry Town on Tuesday night. Barry meet Inter CableTel and Wrexham play Cardiff City in the two-legged semi-finals.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Monie builds up the pressure on Rhinos

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

THERE is little love lost between Leeds Rhinos and Wigan Warriors. John Monie, the Wigan coach, stoked the fires ahead of their second meeting in five weeks — at Headingley tonight — when he said how he was sick of reading how good Leeds are.

"We beat them last time to win the league and we deserved to," Monie said. "All I ever see when I pick up a paper is Leeds, but they still haven't won anything. We'll be doing our utmost to see they don't win the Super League and Bradford will be doing their best to make sure they don't win the Challenge Cup."

As if the rivalry between them was not intense enough, Monie admitted that "there is a lot of feuding building up" — a reference, among other things, to the recent bitter exchange of words between Peter Norbury, the Wigan chairman, and Gary Hetherington, the Leeds chief executive, about allegations that Wigan tried to unsettle Terry Newton, who the Rhinos have switched from hooker in a re-shuffled second row.

Even though their semi-final with Bradford on Sunday week has dictated the decision not to risk Adrian Morley, Richie Blackmore and Marcus St Hilaire, there is every incentive for a supposedly weakened side to repeat their 28-18 cup defeat of Wigan.

Leeds will also be without Anthony Farrell, their most impressive peformer that day, who also hopes to have recovered from a hamstring injury for the Bradford match. The semi-final could do more than anything to take the Rhinos' eye off the ball for the first of three league meetings with Wigan.

Simon Haughton is expected to recover from a hamstring injury for inclusion on the Wigan bench, but Rob Ball stands by. Otherwise, Monie retains the starting side that demolished Hull Sharks in their opening league game.

HOCKEY

Top five clubs face make or break games

PREMIER division clubs in the men's National League face a testing weekend with a double programme that could rearrange the top four positions (Sydney Friskin writes).

Cannock, Southgate and Reading could well finish in that order, but fourth-placed Canterbury are experiencing problems. Beeston, only five points behind, are too close for comfort and the teams meet on Sunday with Beeston the hosts. If Canterbury lose, they will struggle to reach the play-offs to decide the championship, with only one game remaining.

Reading, who visit Guildford tomorrow and play Bournville at home on Sunday, will field the same side that defeated Old Loughtonians 7-3 last week.Southgate can expect stern opposition from Teddington, but on Sunday they will visit struggling Hounslow. The bottom two teams, East Grinstead and Brooklands, play each other on Sunday.

BOWLS

Passionate Scots take title with win over auld enemy

BY DAVID RHYS JONES

SCOTLAND'S women bowlers completed a remarkable sequence of success when they defeated England 110-106 to retain the British team title in Belfast yesterday.

At Bournemouth, less than a week ago, Scotland's men won four out of the five British titles as well as the team championship, and the only title that did not go Scotland's way in Belfast was the singles — in which they were not represented.

No wonder that the stirring strains of *The Flower of Scotland* could be heard from the spectators' gallery as the Scots capered and cavorted their way to the title.

Skill-wise, there was little between the sides, but Scotland played with more *joie de vivre*. Passion triumphed over precision as the energetic Scottish skips attacked heads and converted unpromising situations.

The result was in doubt, however, right up until the last bowl as England, who led briefly at the three-quarter stage, closed to within three shots after 125 of the 126 ends.

Jayne Roylance won 32-14 and Beryl Alderson scored a last-end five to win 20-19, but Edna Bessell narrowly failed to collect the four shots that England needed to snatch the Clara Johns Trophy from Scotland's grasp.

The England team, which included nine newcomers, were disappointed, but at least Helen Walker, who was recalled by the selectors this year but went unrecognised by her team-mates when she arrived in Belfast, wore a broad smile.

A former chocolate-taster from York, she has lost 12½st since she made her international debut three years ago, when she tipped the scales at 24st 9lb.

Ireland turned on a performance worthy of St Patrick's Day — albeit a day late — and avoided the wooden spoon when they beat Wales 135-100.

RUGBY UNION

Dallaglio keen to strengthen the French connection

By David Hands, rugby correspondent

LAWRENCE DALLAGLIO and Jeremy Guscott should get together some time. Dallaglio, the England captain against France in the Five Nations Championship at Twickenham tomorrow, would enjoy playing the French more than once a season, while Guscott, despite nine previous appearances against them, has yet to come to terms with the quality of their back play.

Fear of the unknown has emanated like steam from the England camp this week, from Clive Woodward downwards. In his first season as coach, Woodward was given his comeuppance in Paris at the start of the 1998 championship and wonders in what mood France will approach Twickenham after their defeat by Wales.

Dallaglio, acknowledging the changes forced on France by injury — the latest of them to Thomas Lombard, the Stade Français wing, who gives way to Christophe Dominici, his club colleague, because of a damaged hamstring — emphasised their strength in depth. "They seem to have a conveyor belt of ball-handling forwards and backs who can run great lines with instinct and flair," Dallaglio said.


Dallaglio: learning curve

"Essentially, their squad is that which won two grand slams in a row. People are quick to criticise a side with those achievements behind them. Sadly, this match is played only once a year. We have a great deal to learn from this fixture. It's like the lessons Australia have learnt from playing New Zealand more often."

For others, the rarity of internationals is what gives them an added zest and the Five Nations its particular quality, never more so than this season, when every match has been so hard-fought. Guscott, whose first game against France was in 1990, a time when England had established a stranglehold on the fixture, emphasised the pleasure he takes when the blue shirts are in opposition.

"We could go out with an idea of the French game-plan and they could play in a completely different way," he said. "That's the scary thing about them, you never know what to expect. No other team in the world plays like them.

"On video, their lines of running look quite natural, but when you are in a game the ball they give has to be so full of confidence because sometimes they are passing blind. The way they attack the blind side is different. So our guys coming new to this fixture will have to learn about it for themselves."

It may not be mere coincidence that England have not beaten France since the game went professional. In a seven-year run between 1988 and 1995, Brian Moore, the hooker, made a speciality of igniting the tempers of the French with barbed comments before the game. "In a professional era, that's close to bringing the game into disrepute," Guscott said, "and when they finally did stop our winning run, it was a huge relief to them.

"They have the knack of producing something unbelievable, something very special. It's good that they do, because that is what makes them different. That's why I enjoy playing them. It's seat-of-the-pants stuff."

A capacity crowd of around 10,000 is expected for the A international between the countries at Redruth today as the Rugby Football Union continues its policy of taking representative matches around the regions.

The 1.30pm kick-off has allowed escorted school parties to attend and Terry Burwell, director of Twickenham Services, said: "We are reaping the benefits of a policy which invites different areas to commit themselves to marketing the game successfully, and where the game can be used as a promotional vehicle."

Giovanelli set to return for Italy

By Mark Souster

MASSIMO GIOVANELLI, the Italy captain, is certain today to be picked to play against Wales in Treviso tomorrow after an eight-week ban for stamping was overturned on a technicality in Dublin.

Giovanelli had been sent off at Murrayfield 13 days ago for foul play on Eric Peters, the Scotland No 8. The decision to acquit Giovanelli has incensed the Scottish Rugby Union, whose chief-executive, Bill Watson, said yesterday: "We will not rest until this appalling act is justly penalised for the good of the game."

Giovanelli was sent off by Robert Davies, the Welsh referee, after the intervention of Paul Adams, the touch judge who spotted the offence. The player was suspended by Paul Mauriac, the match commissioner from France, at Murrayfield the same night, following Five Nations Championship guidelines.

On Wednesday, however, the ban was overturned, because the international was not part of the championship. Yet the decision was taken by a Five Nations appeals tribunal which, as far as Scotland are concerned, was adding insult to injury. Watson said: "We don't expect that procedural matters should override the fact that the referee and touch judge considered Mr Giovanelli should be dismissed from the field for an act of foul play."

As discussions continued last night between the Five Nations and the Scottish and Italian unions it was suggested that the incident might result in a criminal investigation. The Lord Advocate, Scotland's, senior law officer, has insisted repeatedly that if sporting bodies do not police themselves then the authorities will. There have been several instances of acts of foul play in both rugby and football that have led to a criminal investigation by the Procurator Fiscal.

Four years ago, Scott McMillan, of Preston Lodge, a lock forward, was jailed for six months after being convicted of assault on a Musselburgh prop.

□ The charity match in support of Disability Sport, England, due to be played at RAF Halton on Sunday, has been switched to Tring RFC.

Samaranch enjoys Olympic high life


FABRICE COFFRINI

Samaranch displays the 1998 IOC annual report that reveals the extent of his lavish expenses; most athletes are not so fortunate, however

From John Goodbody in Lausanne

THE International Olympic Committee (IOC) has total savings of £135 million and £137,000 was spent by its president, Juan Antonio Samaranch, on living expenses here in 1998, official accounts showed yesterday.

For the first time in six years the IOC has published its annual balance sheets, which display the wealth of the movement that ended its 108th session yesterday in apparent harmony.

Samaranch said yesterday that he was surprised at the almost unanimous vote of confidence that he had received — 86 out of the 90 ballots cast — since he had expected that there would be considerably more opposition to him staying on as president.

He has spent an estimated three months abroad on IOC business in 1998 when, like other IOC members, he received travel, hotel and meal expenses and a daily allowance for out-of-pocket expenses. However, his hotel suite at the luxurious Palace Hotel remains permanently booked for his stays here in the Olympic City. In 1997 the total bill was only £600 less.

News of his lavish lifestyle depressed Audley Harrison, the Commonwealth super heavyweight boxing champion, who is £7,000 in debt but who last week turned down a professional contract worth £150,000 in the first year because of his determination to win a gold medal in Sydney.

Harrison, who is ranked No 3 in the world, spoke for many of the world's athletes yesterday. "There is a huge problem between administration and competitors," he said. "Even in amateur boxing the international body has vast amounts of money. They are creaming it off higher up."

Harrison, who received a £7,000 lottery grant for the Commonwealth Games last September and is waiting for it to be renewed from May 1, said: "A few people hold the purse strings to this vast amount of money. It is the nature of these people that they want to enjoy it for themselves."

The honorarium has just been doubled to £660 for the 11 members of the executive board when they attend meetings. This may last only a few days, but can be several weeks during the Games. This money is viewed as partially compensating members for loss of earnings from their jobs.

Much of the IOC's money, which is split between the Olympic Foundation, in which there is £40 million, and its own account, where there is £95 million in savings, is advance television payments for future games.

Dick Pound, an IOC vice-president, argued yesterday that it cannot spend the money because it "may have to be reimbursed if the Olympics are cancelled or diminished in any way." There is also the fear that the boom in staging the Games may burst and the IOC needs to have financial reserves.

On the final day of this emergency session the 91 IOC members agreed that there will be an electoral college that will select a shortlist of two for the 2000 Winter Games. The six cities are Helsinki, Finland; Clagenfurt, Austria; Poprad-Tatry, Slovakia; Sion, Switzerland; Turin, Italy and Zakopane, Poland. The decision will be made on June 19.

EQUESTRIANISM: 'POLICE HORSE' LAYS DOWN LAW WITH FINE DISPLAY OF SPEED JUMPING

Whitaker's Diamond shows real polish

From Jenny MacArthur in 's-Hertogenbosch

JOHN WHITAKER made an auspicious start to the World Cup Show here when he and the Irish-bred Diamond Cliff — a horse that he thought initially was too big for him — won the 50-strong Indoor Brabant event after a masterly display of speed jumping on the huge, long-striding horse.

Standing more than 17 hands high, and nicknamed the "police horse" because of his size, the 11-year-old gelding made light work of the twisty, ten-fence course to relegate Peter Geerink, of Holland, on Damiro, to second place by nine-hundredths of a second.

"He was almost turning too fast for me," a delighted Whitaker said. "You wouldn't call him a speed horse to look at, but he can do the job."

Diamond Cliff, owned by Martin Donoghue and Martin Walsh, has been with Whitaker for 18 months and underlined his scope with a victory in the Windsor Grand Prix last May. Two months later he sustained a severe nosebleed while competing in Rotterdam and was rested for five months. The break proved timely. Since returning to the circuit last month, he has been placed regularly and was third in the competitive Paris Grand Prix last week.

Despite his rapid improvement, though, Whitaker has decided that he is still too inexperienced to ride in the World Cup qualifier on Sunday, the main event of this four-day meeting. Instead, Diamond Cliff will contest the Grand Prix on the same day, while Heyman, on which Whitaker was eighth in Paris last week, goes for the qualifier.

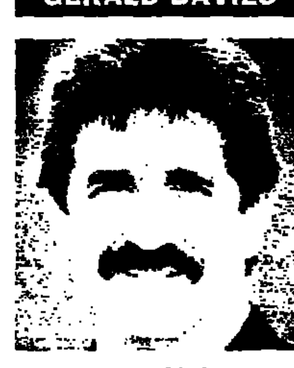
Robert Smith had the fastest time in the class on Senator For The Best but, turning in sharply to the final double, he incurred a frustrating eight faults when the last two fences fell. Smith, who refers to the gelding as "a bit of a wild card", remains confident that he will be in tune for the Grand Prix on Sunday, in which, after his win in Amsterdam, he has the chance of a £30,000 bonus.

Earlier, Francois Mathy, of Belgium, whose top horse Fior succumbed to a severe bout of colic last week, had some timely consolation when he won the Indoor Brabant Stakes on Shurlands Governor, a former winner of the Speed Horse of the Year event at Wembley.

"He's always very competitive, a real trier," Mathy, the son of one of Europe's largest horse dealers, said of the 12-year-old gelding, who won by a comfortable two-second margin from McLain Ward, of the United States, on Alegro.

Italy should shed light on new dawn in Wales




Rugby Union Commentary

Even those who do not follow rugby in Wales know by now that the team is making some kind of statement — either that they are frustratingly changeable, or that they may be starting to offer something different. To confirm the first proposition will only take until tomorrow, when after the exotic extravagance of France, we shall see how far down from the clouds — or not, as the case may be — Wales have come when they play Italy in Treviso.

The second might take a while longer to prove, if ever. What is certain is that the team has aroused curiosity, and not only in Wales. Some may not feel deliriously happy when the Welsh achieve a good result, but at least they will want to know what the Welsh are up to. Better to be looked over, as they say hereabouts, rather than overlooked, which has been the Welsh misfortune for too long.

Wales followers have been here before, and on many occasions, bright new dawns that have proved to be neither new nor bright. Ever since 1988, ten years after Wales's last triple crown triumph in 1979, successive victories or the championship win in 1994 have heralded a sense of optimism that the dismal record of the last couple of decades may be over. It has never been fulfilled; tints of occasional colourful brilliance have been overshadowed by a grey mediocrity.

Some believe that it may be different now, although results do not support this point of view. This season, of the five fixtures played, only two have been won, not enough to call for a street party, although after Paris you could not blame anyone who did. But having enjoyed the thrills of that game and savoured the unexpected victory, the question remains as to whether it was another flash in the pan.

The remarkable point about the win against France was the manner in which it was achieved. Graham Henry, the New Zealander who coaches the Wales team, holds strong views about the way the game should be played and has put them into practice, as he did when he promoted the running, attacking game while he was coach to Auckland. It is one thing to do this in New Zealand, where confidence is never less than high, but quite another to promote it in a nation whose rugby psyche has been persistently battered.

Lesser coaches, having lost their first two matches in the Five Nations Championship, based on a handling game, would have retreated into their shell and tried to play a defensive game. "Shy does not win you matches. Bold does," he says. He lives by this.

That Henry should pursue his attacking policy in the face of adverse results and critical comment may be due to the fact that he is an outsider. The tradition and history of the Five Nations Championship can often be burdensome. The weight of neighbourly conflict forces a contracted vision and inhibits a broader perspective. Henry's view is not so distorted, neither does he carry any baggage from the past.

If the importance of the Five Nations Championship and the passion that attends it has taken him by surprise, as he admits, it has not deflected him from his purpose. The propaganda of envy devaluing the championship, which has emerged from the southern hemisphere, is something that Henry has been forced to reconsider. In return, his hard-nosed attitude, allied to his expansive mood, has enhanced the tournament.

To give a sense of belief to a demoralised Wales team, which was their condition after the Ireland defeat, and to persuade them not to deviate from their style was a significant achievement. Yet, there were suggestions in the previous matches that Wales were attempting to play in a style ambitiously different from the other home countries. The question was whether the ambition was beyond them and, with a fragile team, whether it still is.

Can Wales continue to play a superior game and go on and win a series of matches? Italy may give them some idea.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Injury blow for Thomas

■ ATHLETICS: Iwan Thomas, the Commonwealth 400 metres champion was expected to return to Britain from Johannesburg today after an ankle injury in training. The Welshman, a regular competitor on the South African summer circuit, was due to compete at the high-altitude Ruimsig Stadium track near Johannesburg tomorrow.

■ NETBALL: England have drafted Southampton goal defence Kelly Oxlade into the Under-17 squad to defend the European title in the championships which begin in Cardiff next Thursday. Overlooked in the selection last autumn, Oxlade has won promotion after showing great technical improvement this year.

■ CRICKET: Sam Loxton, one of 11 surviving "Invincibles" from Don Bradman's 1948 Australia side that completed an unbeaten tour of England, is to auction his cherished baggy green cap to raise money to aid cancer research. It is expected to fetch about £15,000.

■ CYCLING: Police in Bologna questioned Abraham Olano, the world time-trial champion, yesterday in connection with a doping inquiry. The reigning world time-trial champion refused to answer reporters' questions when he emerged.

CRICKET: NEW ZEALAND STAGE STUBBORN RECOVERY AFTER STICKY START TO THIRD TEST

South Africa fail to exploit early gains

WELLINGTON (first day of five; New Zealand won toss): New Zealand have scored 211 for six wickets against South Africa

A PARTNERSHIP of 145 for the fifth wicket between Gary Stead and Chris Harris pulled New Zealand out of trouble on the opening day at the Basin Reserve. They had been reduced to 58 for four before Stead and Harris combined to grind down the pace attack.

Harris never looked happy against a barrage of short-pitched bowling, but Stead used the pace of the ball off an excellent batting pitch to collect singles and boundaries behind square on both sides of the wicket.

The second new ball accounted for Stead when he was magnificently caught by Shaun Pollock off the bowling of Steve Elworthy after batting 210 minutes for his 68.

Elworthy, deputising for the injured Allan Donald, collected his fourth wicket of the day shortly before the close when Daniel Vettori, the nightwatchman, edged to Kallis at second slip.

Harris became unwell during the last session, because of the effects of dehydration on a hot, sunny day, but recovered and will resume with 66 runs to his name after 225 minutes at the crease.

The South Africa bowlers were supported by fine slip catching, Jonty Rhodes's effort to remove Bryan Young being outstanding.

NEW ZEALAND: First Innings

M J Horne c Cullinan b Pollock	2
B A Young c Rhodes b Kallis	18
R G Twose c Boucher b Elworthy	12
N J Astle b Elworthy	20
G R Stead c Pollock b Elworthy	68
C Z Harris not out	66
D L Vettori c Kallis b Elworthy	4
†A C Parore not out	0
Extras (lb 18, nb 3)	21
Total (6 wkts)	211

*D J Nash, S B Doull and S B O'Connor to bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-7, 2-32, 3-57, 4-58, 5-203, 6-207.

BOWLING: Pollock 22-10-30-1; Elworthy 21-7-58-4; Kallis 20-5-44-1; Klusener 15-7-33-0; Adams 7-2-12-0; Cronje 5-3-16-0

SOUTH AFRICA: G Kirsten, H H Gibbs, J H Kallis, D J Cullinan, *W J Cronje, J N Rhodes, S M Pollock, †M V Boucher, L Klusener, S Elworthy, P R Adams.

Umpires: S Venkataraghavan (India) and D B Cowie.

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Birmingham Bullets 91 Edinburgh Rocks 82; Worthing Bears 88 Derby Storm 100.
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Boston 118 Los Angeles Clippers 84, Philadelphia 114 Indiana 110; Atlanta 85 Miami 86, Charlotte 119 Phoenix 111, Detroit 101 Toronto 103, New Jersey 88 Dallas 87, Orlando 103 Chicago 94, Denver 109 Houston 114, Golden State 78 San Antonio 82.

BOWLS

BELFAST: Women's home international indoor championship: Ireland bt Wales 135-100 (Ireland skips first: J Mulholland bt L Evans 23-13, D Bard bt D Rowlands 27-15, J Evans bt J Ackland 24-21; A McGuinness bt A Dainton 23-17, C O'Gorman bt S Oliver 24-13, S Bailie lost to M Tanner 14-21)

EQUESTRIANISM

'S HERTOGENBOSCH, Holland: World Cup Show: Indoor Brabant Prize: 1, Diamond Cliff (J Whitaker, GB) 0 penalties in 50.51sec; 2, Damiro (P Geerink, Holl) 0 in 50.60; 3, Halifax (E Hendrix, Holl) 0 in 54.48. Indoor Brabant Stakes: 1, Shurlands Governor (F Mathy, Bel) 0 in 51.23; 2, Alegro (M Ward, US) 0 in 53.24; 3, Gordon (E Tacken, Holl) 0 in 53.49.

FOOTBALL

Cup Winners' Cup

Quarter-final, second leg

L MOSCOW (0) 1 M HAIFA (0) 0
Tchugainov 72 (pen) 16,000
(Lokomotiv Moscow win 4-0 on agg)

Wednesday's late results

EUROPEAN CUP: Quarter-finals, second leg: Dynamo Kiev 2 Real Madrid 0 (Dynamo Kiev win 3-1 on agg). Internazionale 1 Man Utd 1 (Man Utd win 3-1 on agg). Kaiserslautern 0 Bayern Munich 4 (Bayern Munich win 6-0 on agg); Olympiakos 1 Juventus 1 (Juventus win 3-2 on agg)
NATIONWIDE CONFERENCE: Forest Green 1 Yeovil 2.
DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Midland division: Paget 0 Moor Green 1. Southern division: Brackley 0 Baldock 1
WELSH CUP: Quarter-final replay: Conwy 1 Ammanford 0
HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Clachnacuddin 2 Keith 2; Huntly 2 Fraserburgh 1, Rothes 1 Peterhead 3.
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Brentford 1 Norwich 4, Brighton 1 Wimbledon 1; Cambridge 3 Southampton 4, Gillingham 1 West Ham 1, Luton 3 Wycombe 1, Oxford 2 Barnet 0, Peterborough 1 Bournemouth 1; Watford 3 Queens Park Rangers 2.
SCHWEPPES ESSEX SENIOR LEAGUE: Premier division: Bowers 2 Concord 1.
COMPLETE MUSIC HELLENIC LEAGUE: Premier division: Swindon Supermarine 0 Cirencester Academy 0
ARNOTT INSURANCE NORTH LEAGUE: First division: Guisborough 2 Billingham Synthonia 0.
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Nottm Forest 2 Derby 2. First division: Bolton 0 Tranmere 1, Middlesbrough 5 Wolverhampton 0. Second division: Blackpool 0 Newcastle 1, Huddersfield 2 York 0; Rotherham 1 Shrewsbury 3, Scarborough 2 Notts County 0, Wrexham 5 Lincoln 3. Third division: Bury 1 Hull 0; Chester 1 Carlisle 1, Chesterfield 1 Hartlepool 1. League Cup: Quarter-final: Darlington 0 Bradford 2.
UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: East Preston 1 Chichester 3; Hassocks 2 Langney Sports 0.
JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Cowes Sports 5 Gosport 0; Hamble ASSC 1 Whitchurch 2.
MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division: Brache Sparta 3 Waltham Abbey 3; Buckingham Athletic 3 Milton Keynes 3, Toddington 0 Brook House 0
BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Premier division: Smethwick 1 Bandon 1, Tipton 3 Bustleholme 1; Wolverhampton 0 Lye 3
CLUB MATCH: Boulogne 2 Liverpool 1.
DUTCH LEAGUE: Cambuur Leeuwarden 1 Feyenoord 5; NAC Breda 0 RKC Waalwijk 2; Fortuna Sittard 3 Utrecht 2.

HOCKEY

ALDERSHOT: Services championship: Veterans: Royal Navy 2 RAF 0. Juniors: Royal Navy 4 RAF 4. Seniors: Royal Navy 2 RAF 3. Women: Army 3 Royal Navy 2.

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Tampa Bay 0 Pittsburgh 2, Washington 2 Dallas 1 (OT); Detroit 3 Phoenix 4, Toronto 1 Boston 4; Chicago 3 Calgary 1; Edmonton 1 New Jersey 4, Anaheim 2 Ottawa 2, San Jose 4 Florida 2.

RUGBY LEAGUE

NORTHERN FORD PREMIERSHIP: Featherstone 28 Widnes 12; Whitehaven 24 Lancashire Lynx 12, Hull KR 8 Oldham 8.

RUGBY UNION

ANGLO-WELSH CLUB MATCH: Gloucester 25 Cardiff 30
CLUB MATCH: Richmond XV 41 Royal Navy 17.

SAILING

CLIPPER ROUND-THE-WORLD RACE: Leg 5e (Shanghai to Hong Kong; with miles to finish): 1, Ariel (A Thomson) 405; 2, Antiope (K Harris) 413; 3, Taeping (N Fleming) 415; 4, Chrysolite (T Hedges) 422; 5, Serica (R Dean) 425; 6, Mermerus (B Soltars) 442; 7, Thermopylae (M Tod) 470

FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

FOOTBALL LEAGUE YOUTH ALLIANCE: Third division: Wrexham v Shrewsbury (1.0)
FAI HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Shelbourne v Sligo (7.45), Waterford v Shamrock (7.45).
FA PREMIER ACADEMY LEAGUE: Under-19: Nott'm Forest v Arsenal (2.0)

RUGBY UNION

A international matches

England v France (at Redruth, 1.30)
Italy v Wales (at Rovigo, 7.30)
Scotland v Ireland (at Myreside, 7.0)

Under-21 international matches

England v France (at Worcester, 7.30)
Italy v Wales (at Udine, 2.0)
Scotland v Ireland (at Bridgehaugh, Stirling, 6.30)

CLUB MATCH: Harlequins v Biarritz (7.30).

RUGBY LEAGUE

JJB Super League

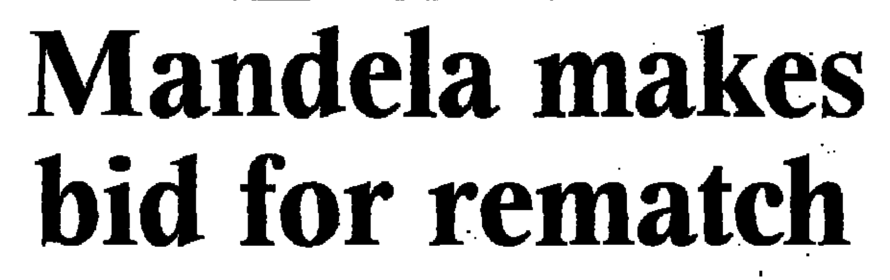
Leeds v Wigan (7.30)

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Milton Keynes Lions v Leicester Riders (7.30); Sheffield Sharks v Manchester Giants (7.45).
HOCKEY: Women's home nations tournament (at DISC, Dundee): Under-18: Scotland v Ireland (1.30), England v Wales (3.15). Under-16: Scotland v Ireland (10.0); Wales v England (11.45).
ICE HOCKEY: Sekonda play-off championship: Group B: Newcastle Riverkings v Cardiff Devils (7.15).



BOXING: SOUTH AFRICAN MINT DESIGNS $3 MILLION BELT TO ATTRACT LEWIS AND HOLYFIELD



Mandela makes bid for rematch

Lennox Lewis flew into London yesterday and called on Evander Holyfield to give him the World Boxing Association (WBA) and International Boxing Federation (IBF) belts the world thinks are rightfully his. Lewis, the World Boxing Council (WBC) champion, once again said that Holyfield should admit that he was beaten in the bout for the undisputed world heavyweight championship in New York last weekend, which was scored a draw. It was time the warrior started being a sportsman and did the right thing.

Lewis said: "If Evander Holyfield is a man he should admit that he got beaten and give me my belts. But he is not that kind of character. There were [American] journalists who were saying that I have no heart. Now they have all turned around. They realise that I won the fight, that Holyfield is holding my belts. They are actually my belts.

"I have answered many questions about myself and there are other questions and I will answer them as well. It was weird to see so many people coming up and saying I won. The public got hurt because they came to see a champion crowned and they were disappointed they did not."

While Holyfield considers his next move and Lewis's management tries to get Holyfield back in the ring for a rematch, Nelson Mandela has stepped into the row. The South African President has offered to stage the bout in South Africa for the Mandela Belt, which will be for the undisputed title. The belt, which has been designed with the help of the South African mint, will be made of 22-carat gold and cost $3 million.

In New York, government agencies have started investigations into allegations of corruption by officials involved in the Lewis-Holyfield bout at Madison Square Garden. A grand jury has been convened to see whether criminal proceedings are warranted.

Panos Eliades, the head of Panix, the London promotion company behind Lewis, said that everyone involved in the promotion at the Garden had been subpoenaed, including Seth Abraham, the president of Time Warner Sport, Lou DiBella, his vice-president, Don King, the promoter, the presidents of the WBC, the WBA and the IBF, and the three judges.

Lewis poses with a photo of the proposed Mandela Belt

Meanwhile, it has been reported that Eugenia Williams, the judge who scored the fight in favour of Holyfield, filed bankruptcy papers six weeks before the contest.

Eliades said the Lewis team would not be waiting for the verdicts of the different investigating bodies, and would be going ahead with talks with Holyfield and promoters for the rematch. He believes that if Holyfield does intend to fight, he would not step into the ring before September or October.

"We are discussing terms with Holyfield," Eliades said. "He has said he wants a rematch. I don't know if he means it. He has asked for more money than he received before."

Don King would not be involved with the next promotion because, according to Eliades, he broke his contract by not putting up letters of credit for the Lewis-Holyfield fight and HBO had to step in. "We don't want King as promoter. We need an independent promoter," Eliades said.

"The people who have been put forward are Madison Square Garden, and they have agreed to promote. They are looking at the Yankee Stadium, which holds 60,000. We are looking at different locations. As well as South Africa, Las Vegas and Britain.

"Nelson Mandela is willing to find the money. So far, the South African offer is by far the best, double other bids. Nelson Mandela is shocked at what happened with Lennox. He wants to put things right."

Frank Maloney, Lewis's manager, has had talks with Tony Banks, the Minister for Sport, and was thinking of staging the bout at Wembley or Cardiff. "Cardiff would like it in September. Their stadium holds 75,000 and the roof can keep out the weather."

Lewis's lawyers have petitioned the three boxing organisations to declare both the fighters mandatory challengers. That could force Holyfield to meet Lewis for a purse put up by a promoter if the two fighters cannot agree terms. If Holyfield refused then, he would be stripped of his titles.

SRIKUMAR SEN

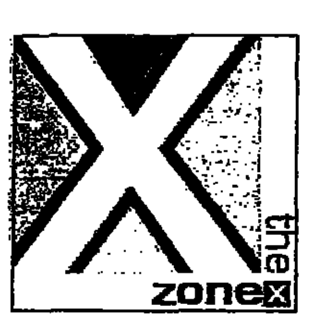


New challenge fits the bill



Catley and his fellow boxers will have their stamina tested

David Powell looks forward to a contest that will settle an old argument



FOR those who do not know their abductors from their adductors, their gluteus maximus from their gluteus minimus, there will be no active part to play in the X Zone at the NEC in Birmingham this weekend. Casual spectators should prepare for a bewildering experience. So many fit people, so much high-tech gym equipment. Leave your flab at the door. If only.

For all but a few, the body beautiful does not come easy. High-performance fitness is hard-earned. Take Hywel Davies, the organisers' tip to win the men's individual title. Around his job as a teacher, Davies trains mornings and evenings. "Two hours in the gym every night, a 30-minute run in the mornings, three to five hours' cycling or running at weekends," he said.

While the inter-sports team challenge will feature some of Britain's leading sportsmen and women — Harlequins and Bath from rugby union, Leeds Rhinos from rugby league, Frank Warren's boxers and the England women's hockey squad among them — it is the winners of the open competitions who will be able to claim to be Britain's fittest man and woman.

Davies felt obliged to enter. He thought he held the undisputed title already, but when Esprit, a marketing company, decided to enter the fray, Davies was cornered. "With the publicity the X Zone is getting, anybody who wins is going to go round saying he is Britain's fittest man," Davies said. "I do not want anybody claiming that without me having a go."

A health and fitness magazine — the publication whose competition Davies won — has accused the organisers of plagiarising its event. "This is another title I need to confirm my place," Davies said. "I have won everything else there is to win."

Michael Smithwick, managing director of Esprit, argues that the X Zone is the best attempt yet to find Britain's fittest people. He claims that, by promoting the X Zone through 2,700 health clubs and *The Times*, he has the strongest claim yet. However, Mark McKeon, editor of *Ultra-Fit* magazine, said: "The *Ultra-Fit* X-Training Challenge is far superior to the X Zone because the former tests all components of fitness in a progressive, systematic manner."

The X Zone involves ten gymnasium-based disciplines and takes the form of race competition, with heats, semi-finals and finals over two days. "No professional sportsman would get anywhere near the guy who wins this," Smithwick said.



Cullen hopes to shatter a few myths about hockey players

Davies said: "The X Zone is the best all-round test of aerobic fitness because it has got cycling, rowing, stepping and running, but there is no strength involved." This may count against him on Sunday. "There are people who are aerobically fitter," he said. "If you take the best marathon runner in the country and the best weightlifter, you have got me in between."

> 'Anybody who wins will say he is Britain's fittest sportsman'

The team challenge has drawn 12 sports for a straight final, with men and women in the same race. Each team will comprise five competitors, the ten disciplines shared between them. How fit is an international hockey player compared with a boxer or rugby player? This attempts to find out. The England players Tina Cullen, Carolyn Reid, Jennie Bimson and Sarah Blanks are included. "This is a great opportunity to shatter the myth about jolly hockey sticks and demonstrate how fit our players are," Ian Thomas, the marketing director of English Hockey, said.

They will find tough women's opposition from rowing, which includes Cath Bishop and Dot Blackie, runners-up in the world championship coxless pairs last year.

Glenn Catley, who fought Richie Woodhall last year for the World Boxing Council super-middleweight title, is among those representing Warren's boxing stable. The squad has been put together by Chris Sanigar, the trainer. "Chris is fascinated with the idea of putting his lads to the test," Richard Hart, Warren's spokesman, said.

The Harlequins squad is drawn from the club's first XV and includes Chris Sheasby, while Leeds Rhinos have named Iestyn Harris, Andy Hay, Marvin Golden and Francis Cummins from the team that took the club into the Challenge Cup semi-finals last week. Also strongly represented is squash, with Del Harris, Paul Johnson, Chris Walker and Simon Parke.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 46

TAZZA
(b) A shallow ornamental bowl or vase. Properly, one supported on a foot. The Italian word for a cup. "Beautiful tazzas of jasper, lapis-lazuli, and malachite."

TOWHEE
(c) The ground-robin or cheewink of North America, *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*. An echoic name, from one of its notes. "He utters his loud Towhee, a note so characteristic that it has become one of his names."

UPPING
(c) The action of catching and marking swans. "The operation of upping is performed by the Crown and the Companies' swan-masters together."

UVEA
(c) The posterior coloured surface or choroid coat of the eye. The name for it in medieval medical Latin.

SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE
1 ... R8f3! and if 2 gxf3 Qxh3+ mates; if the white queen moves then 2 ... Rxh3+ will mate while finally 2 Qxf3 Rxf3 3 Rxf3 Nf2+ wins easily on material.

TELEVISION CHOICE

New cars for old rope

Trading Up
Channel 4, 8pm

Like most game shows this is mammon time — but fun with it. A studio audience to will the contestants on? You've got it. The contestants? Two couples, both self-conscious and trying hard to be characters but rather nice. The host? The gangling Claudia Winkleman doesn't seem over the top and seems to know what she's doing. So far, so predictable. Now here's the gimmick. There are four cars on offer (each gets an analysis from a Jack the Lad car dealer and a rather sterner motoring journalist), and the two couples pick the one they fancy. But will they be allowed to drive it away? Winkleman puts them through the hoops with her questions, and the audience, not knowing their original choices, votes on which car best suits them. Will they be trading up or driving home in their old jalopy? Worth a spin . . .

Murder Most Horrid
BBC2, 9pm

In *Confessions of a Murderer* Dawn French, at her most manic, plays the cop and crime-obsessed Harriet Snelgrove. Her cats are named Bodie, Doyle and Frost. She collects old videos of *Hawaii Five-O* and can mime every word. Over the past ten years not a crime in her home patch of Nutley has gone unsolved — because Ms Snelgrove has confessed loudly and in lurid detail, to every one of them. The local duty officer (Philip Jackson) explains to the new young inspector (fresh out of university and gloriously pedantic) that Snelgrove is bonkers. But the poor man has to find out the truth the hard way. Co-written by Ian Hislop and Nick Newman, this is the best yet.

Smack the Pony
Channel 4, 9.30pm

Fiona Allen, Doon MacKichan and Sally Phillips you may recognise from separate appearances in shows such as *Goodness Gracious Me*, *The Day Today*, *Brass Eye* and *I'm Alan Partridge*. Now they've grouped together for Talkback Productions (responsible for most of the above) and come up with a chain of short sketches almost every one of which hits its target. Feminist without being strident, they put women down as crisply as they do men, and are, in short, very, very funny. You're in luck, too, because you can enjoy them straight after *Murder Most Horrid*. And no, I don't know what the title means. Enjoy.

Fiona Allen, Doon Mackichan and Sally Phillips in *Smack the Pony* (C4, 9.30pm)

Pleasure Island
ITV, 10.30pm

You will now see sights it was impossible to see on television (even Channel 4) as little as five years ago. Pleasure Island is the nickname for a Jamaican resort called Hedonism II. "If it's wicked it's included", says Eladio the suave MC as he shows new tourists the various activities . . . "This is the all-nude area — volleyball courts here — and the wet T-shirt area . . ." Out of the fog and grime of urban England (largely it would seem the North) they come — like Maggie with her suitcase of ear plugs, HRT pills and fan photos of Cliff Richard. Maggie manages a petrol station and has been on anti-depressants for a year. She first heard of Hedonism II on TV. Jamaican locals privately call it The Zoo.

Elizabeth Cowley

RADIO CHOICE

The News Quiz
Radio 4, 6.30pm

The return of *The News Quiz* is a radio event always to be welcomed, with the caveat on this occasion being that it replaces *The Sunday Format*, undoubtedly the best new comedy show for a long time and one that deserved better than a four-week run. *The News Quiz* is of course the show that launched BBC2's *Have I Got News For You* and I still think that the father is better than the offspring; the latter is too often a vehicle for celebrity showing-off whereas on radio you actually have to be funny. The presenter Simon Hoggart had a hard act to follow when he took over from Barry Took but he has warmed to the job. The team captains are Andy Hamilton and some chap called Coren.

Afternoon Play: M for Mother
Radio 4, 2.15pm

I am for once in the happy position of knowing as much about this play's ending as any other listener; it has apparently been changed since I was sent a preview tape but whatever has been done to it I doubt that the play, adapted by Gabrielle Lloyd from Marjorie Riddell's collected writings, is any less listenable. This is a witty tale about mother-daughter relationships and how cutting the proverbial apron strings is no guarantee of escape. The setting is Cheshire in 1954 and mother (Rosalind Ayres) never tires of warning daughter (Jennifer Dundas Lowe) about the perils of leaving home, which of course is what daughter does. Miriam Margoyles, Jane Carr and Caroline Seymour co-star.

Peter Barnard

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball **9.00** Simon Mayo **12.00** Jo Whiley **2.00pm** Mark Radcliffe **4.00** Chris Moyles **5.45** Newsbeat **6.00** Pete Tong's Essential Selection **9.00** Judge Jules **11.00** Radio 1 Rap Show **2.00am** Fabio and Grooverider **4.00** Emma B

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Alex Lester **7.30** Sarah Kennedy **9.30** Ken Bruce **12.00** Jimmy Young **2.00pm** Ed Stewart **5.05** Des Lynam **7.00** The Michael Feinstein Songbook — Turns Another Page. New series (1/8) **7.30** Friday Night Is Music Night **9.15** Single and Single (4/8) **9.30** Listen to the Band **10.00** David Jacobs **10.30** Sheridan Morley **11.45** The People's Psalms **12.00** Nicky Horne **4.00am** Lata Sharma

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports **6.00** Breakfast with Julian Worricker and Victoria Derbyshire **9.00** Nicky Campbell **12.00** The Midday News with Annie Webster **1.00pm** Ruscoe and Co **4.00** Drive with Allan Robb and Jane Garvey **7.00** News Extra. News round-up, including a sports bulletin **7.30** Alan Green's Sportsnight. Brian Moore and studio guests discuss the week's sporting issues **10.00** Late Night Live **1.00am** Up All Night

TALK RADIO

6.00am The Big Boys Breakfast **9.00** Scott Chisholm & Sally James **12.00** Motoring **1.00pm** Anna Raeburn **3.00** OK! to Talk **5.00** The Sports Zone **8.00** Nicky Horne's Access all Areas **10.00** Dave Barrett **1.00am** Mike Dickin

VIRGIN

6.30am Chris Evans **9.30** Russ Williams **1.00pm** Nick Abbot **4.00** Harriet Scott **7.00** Wheels of Steel **11.00** Janey Lee Grace **2.00am** Steve Power

BBC WORLD SERVICE

5.00am The World Today **7.00** World News **7.15** Outlook **7.55** My Century **8.00** World News **8.05** Westway **8.20** Off the Shelf: Enduring Love **8.35** Science in Action **9.00** World News **9.05** The Art of Translating **9.20** John Peel **9.50** Sports Round-Up **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** Britain Today **10.45** Your Questions Of Faith **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Focus on Faith **12.00** World News **12.05pm** Outlook **12.45** Sports Round-Up **1.00** Newshour **2.00** World News **2.05** Science in Action **2.30** Music Review **3.00** World News **3.05** Football Extra **3.15** Performance **3.30** The Vintage Chart Show **4.00** World News **4.15** Insight **4.30** Multi track: Alternative **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Sports Round-Up **6.00** World News **6.15** Britain Today **6.30** Focus on Faith **7.00** World News **7.05** Science in Action **7.30** Your Question Of Faith **7.45** Off the Shelf: Enduring Love **8.00** Newshour **9.00** World News **9.05** World Business Report **9.20** Britain Today **9.30** Music Review **10.00** World News **10.15** Sports Round-Up **10.30** Multitrack: Alternative **11.00** World News **11.05** Outlook **11.45** Insight **12.00** The World Today **12.30am** Science in Action **12.55** My Century **1.00** The World Today **1.30** Meridian Books **2.00** The World Today **2.30** People and Politics **3.00** The World Today **3.20** Sports Round-Up **3.30** World Business Report **3.45** Insight **4.00** The World Today **4.30** Weekend

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Nick Bailey's Easier Breakfast. Music to get the day off to a fine start **9.00** Michael Mappin. The Hall of Fame Hour and Classic Masterpiece **12.00** Lunchtime Requests. Jane Jones plays favourite music **2.00pm** Concerto. Brahms (Violin Concerto in D major) **3.00** Jamie Crick. Continuous Classics, plus sport updates and travel news **6.30** Newsnight. Top stories and interviews with guests from the arts world **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven. John Brunning introduces classic sounds **9.00** Evening Concert. Rachmaninov (Rhapsody on a theme of Paganini. Elgar (Cello Concerto in E minor); Brahms (Symphony No 2 in D major) **11.00** Mann at Night. Music through till the small hours **2.00am** Concerto. Brahms (Violin Concerto in D major) (r) **3.00** Mark Griffiths introduces the Early Breakfast Show

RADIO 3

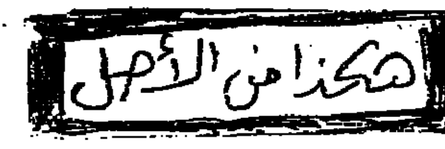
6.00am On Air with Petroc Trelawny. Beethoven (Egmont Overture); Leclair (Violin Concerto in D, Op 7 No 2); Elgar (Froissart Overture)
9.00 Masterworks with Peter Hobday. Dvorak (Slavonic Suite in C, Op 46); Poulenc, after Gervaise (Suite francaise); Faure (Prelude: Penelope); Debussy (Trois poemes de Mallarme); Andre Caplet (Conte fantasique); Mozart (Symphony No 39 in G minor, K543)
10.30 Artist of the Week: Gillian Weir
11.00 Sound Stories: Medical Matters A look at Ravel's ill health
12.00 Composer of the Week: Strauss
1.00pm The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert Roland Pontinen, piano. Includes Bosoni (Gigue, Bolero and Variations); Turandots Frauengemach; Die Nachtlichen, Elegies); Liszt (Gnomenreigen, S145 No 2; Vexilla regis prodeunt; Wiegenlied; Valse oubliee No 4); Debussy (Pour les sixtes; Pour les degres chromatiques) (r)
2.00 The BBC Orchestras BBC National Orchestra of Wales under Mark Wigglesworth and Tadeaki Otaka, Martin Roscoe, piano. Tchaikovsky (Overture: Romeo and Juliet); Brahms (Piano Concerto No 1 in D minor); Tchaikovsky (The Nutcracker, Act 2)
4.00 Music Restored Lucie Skeaping introduces a programme of country delights (r)
4.45 Music Machine with Tommy Pearson
5.00 In Tune Sean Rafferty is joined by the pianist Imogen Cooper, who performs live in the studio
7.30 Performance on 3 (Sounding the Century) Live from St John's, Smith Square, London, introduced by Stephanie Hughes. London Mozart Players under Matthias Bamert. Britten (Prelude and Fugue); Bloch (Concerto Grosso No 1); Martin (Petite Symphonie Concertante) **8.30** Book of the Month. An extended review of *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King* **8.50** Concert, part two. Tippett (Concerto for Orchestra)
9.40 Postscript: The Pas de Deux (5/5)
10.00 Hear and Now Verity Sharp investigates the thriving new music scene in New Zealand. Includes the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Kenneth Young, performing Gillian Whitehead (Resurgences); Jack Body (Melodies); Helen Bowater (New Year Fanfare); Lyell Cresswell (Salm); John Psathas (Seikilos)
11.30 Jazz Century (Sounding the Century) Russell Davies presents a 52-part history of jazz (r)
12.00 Composer of the Week: Delius (r)
1.00am Through the Night **1.00** Brahms (Liebeslieder; Neue Liebeslieder; Selection of Hungarian Dances) **2.15** Prokofiev (Romeo and Juliet) **2.45** Prokofiev (Four Etudes, Op 2) **2.55** Mozart (Requiem) **3.55** Rudolf Escher (Trio) **4.40** Durante (Concerto No 1 in F minor) **5.05** Franck (Prelude, Chorale and Fugue) **5.30** Bach (Violin Sonata No 3 in C, Fugue) **5.50** Schubert (Du bist die Ruh; Bei dir allein)

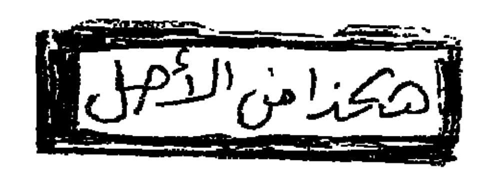
RADIO 4

5.30am World News **5.35 Shipping Forecast**
5.40 Inshore Forecast **5.45 Prayer for the Day**
5.47 Farming Today with Charlotte Smith
6.00 Today with John Humphrys and Sue MacGregor
8.35 (LW) Yesterday in Parliament The latest political developments
9.00 Desert Island Discs Sue Lawley's castaway is the restaurant critic Fay Maschler (r)
9.45 (FM) Serial: Letters from My Windmill Stephen Fry reads the last of five extracts from Alphonse Daudet's reflections on Provence and its people
9.45 (LW) An Act of Worship
10.00 Woman's Hour The chief prosecutor for the UN War Crimes Tribunal Louise Arbour talks to Jenni Murray about her work
11.00 Sharks and Seagulls: A Summer with Sussex David Stafford concludes his look at the fortunes of Sussex County Cricket Club (r)
11.30 Sunny Side Up The Glee Boys enter the barbershop grand final in Harrogate (6/6)
12.00 (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
12.00 (FM) News **12.04pm You and Yours** Consumer issues and public service reports, presented by Liz Barclay and John Waite
1:00 The World at One with Nick Clarke
1.30 Puzzle Panel Chris Maslanka presents riddles and brain-teasers
2.00 The Archers Yesterday's edition (r)
2.15 Afternoon Play: M for Mother by Marjorie Riddell. A woman becomes increasingly concerned about her daughter's move to London and feels compelled to interfere. See Choice (r)
3.00 Making History New series. Sue Cook investigates historical mysteries, and offers advice on conducting research
3.30 Carnival Tales Mark Rickards experiences the flamboyent carnival atmosphere at Rio Grande de Sal. Last in series (5/5)
3.45 This Sceptred Isle Part 55 of the history of Britain, narrated by Anna Massey (r)
4.00 Open Book Humphrey Carpenter and guests discuss a new version of *Aesop's Fables* and modern novels involving journeys (r)
4.30 The Message Alex Brodie and his guests discuss current media trends
5.00 PM with Kevin Bocquet and Chris Lowe
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 The News Quiz New series. See Choice
7.00 The Archers Pat feels strange
7.15 Front Row Live arts programme
7.45 The Cry of the Bittern by Tim Jackson. Broadcast earlier as part of *Woman's Hour* (r)
8.00 Any Questions? Audience members from Leyburn in North Yorkshire address panellists including the *Times* columnist Will Self and Steven Norris. Chaired by Jonathan Dimbleby
8.45 Letter from America Alistair Cooke with another slice of stateside life
9.00 The Friday Play: Ain't it Grand to Be Bloomin' Well Dead by John Clifford, inspired by Federico Garcia Lorca. Leslie analyses his relationships, sexuality and death. With Graham Turner, Tom McGovern and Liam Brennan
10.00 The World Tonight Robin Lustig presents
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Strait is the Gate David McKail concludes his reading of André Gide's story (r)
11.00 Late Night on 4: Late Tackle Eleanor Oldroyd chairs the sporting magazine
11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament
11.30 (FM) Sport in the Movies Pat Butcher investigates the history of sport on film
12.00 News **12.30am The Late Book: The Mask of Command** The final part of John Keegan's meditation on the nature of leadership
12.48 Shipping Forecast **1.00 As World Service**

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 693, 909. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, 1089.

Television and radio listings compiled by Perry Cleveland-Peck, Ian Hughes, Gillian Maxey, Jane Gregory and Barry O'Keefe





The bra's the star so why bother with cars?

I don't think Jeremy Clarkson ever really left **Top Gear** (BBC1). He just transmuted into half-a-dozen other presenters. The spirit of the lolloping, permed prankster hangs over the programme like sticky ectoplasmic gloop, forcing each and every one of them to talk in the same laddish, quasi-ironic, wacky exaggerations.

Whatever you have read elsewhere, the real reason Clarkson left the show was that he was unwilling to conform to the rule that all male presenters with the letter "l" in their names must have a double letter where you would normally expect to find one.

This leaves Quentin Willson, who has had his twisty, ironic little smile wired into place, ruling the roost, with Tiff Needell as heir apparent.

Last night Willson and femalle sidekick Julia (women are exempt from the double l rule) Bradbury went to the Geneva Motor Show in a new Llotus Esprit 350. But they pretended Willson made a bish of the navigation and they nearlly went to Budapest, which was simplly hillarious! Then they pretended they had driven right into the middlle of the show, which had me fallling off my seat!

"This is automotive pornography," said Willson of the new Ferrari 360 Modena. "The Itallians have perfected on perfection." He allso lloved Fiat's compact peoplle-carrier. "The interior is a mixture of Vivienne Westwood and Fireballl XLL5," he cllaimed confusinglly. "When did you llast see an air-vent as dellicious as that?" Actuallly, it llooked rather ugly to me. And who wants to eat an air-vent?

Even the female presenters talk this gibberish, and turn out to be lads with breasts. "It's the most fun you can have with your bra on — or off!" quipped Vicki Butler-Henderson after test-driving a Lotus III S Then she threw a bra out of the car window just like Claudia Schiffer in that French car advert. Llaugh? I nearlly did.

All this humour is a smokescreen. It affects a satirical distance, an amused detachment complicit between programme and viewers, which is entirely phoney. The nitty gritty is buried in the jargon of auto-speak and V12 engines which "pack" this, "punch" that or give "masses of power down at the bottom". One car has a "delivery of 420 horses", apparently, while another, worryingly, "will punch out nearly 150 horses". Tiff Needell even went for a niche in history in a McLaren F1. He broke the record for the Fastest Average Speed for a Production Car around a UK circuit. Gosh.

Let's face it, these people are nerds. This is a motoring programme for fantasists. Audience research reveals that the programme packs a walloping 0.01 per cent of viewers who will ever be able to afford any of these cars new (I guess). Committed regulars must watch the programme as they might flick through a copy of *Playboy*, ogling the goodies, but unable to touch.

REVIEW



Paul Hoggart

At least it proves that such fantasising is not simply the preserve of men, a point which was raised again in a different guise during **Every Woman Knows a Secret** (ITV), the first of a three-part adaptation of Rosie Thomas's novel.

This is one of those tragi-romantic psycho-dramas so beloved of TV drama commissioners, in the tradition of *Imogen's Face* or those Deborah Moggach adaptations. Siobhan Redmond plays Jess, a 40-year-old divorcée who dotes on her 22-year-old son, Danny.

When Danny is killed in a drink-driving accident she is inconsol-able, unable to forgive his friend Rob, a handsome blond carpenter, who was at the wheel and survived. But Rob is strangely drawn to her and insists on revealing the unknown dark side of Danny's character, that he was a spoilt, arrogant would-be rapist who caused the accident himself. So, of course, they go to bed together. As you do.

When male writers construct scenarios in which a middle-aged middle-class bloke gets to have sex with a beautiful young woman, this is usually treated with some suspicion. Melvyn Bragg's *A Time To Dance*, for instance, was ridiculed for such male-menopausal wish-fulfilment. Well middle-aged women do it, too, in this case with a hunky chippy, so there!

It was reasonably entertaining. All these adaptations suffer from the concertina-effect of novels squashed into screenplays. It was hard to establish character, and events were so rapid I occasionally lost track of who was who and where and why. And it lacked the insight of a Moggach.

But Siobhan Redmond's bulging eyes blazed convincingly under her fringe of flaming red locks and that made up for a lot. I wish she didn't remind me of *Home Front*'s Anne McKevitt, though. I kept expecting her to cover everything in lime-green MDF.

Doomed! We're all still doomed, I tell you again! **Horizon** (BBC2), normally such a sober, responsible series, entered the realm of the "Nature's Most Violent Apocalypse From Space!" type documentaries which are all the rage these days, with *New Asteroid Danger*.

To be fair the programme last night took the usual pains to establish the scientific basis of its main proposition. This is that the current obsession with massive asteroid or comet impacts is a distraction from a much more real and present danger.

The Earth is hit every 50 years or so by objects large enough and fast enough to cause the equivalent of many nuclear explosions on impact. Such devastating impacts have occurred in Siberia (1908), the Arabian Desert (1863) and the Brazilian rainforest (1930). Eventually one will wipe out a city without warning. So sit back and savour those fantasies, because we are all doomed!

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (85432)
7.00 Breakfast News (T) (21161)
9.00 Kilroy (T) (2497635)
9.45 Wipeout (1496780)
10.10 The Vanessa Show (T) (7386074)
10.55 News; Weather (T) (3939161)
11.00 Change That (3956838)
11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (3853797)
11.55 News; Weather (T) (7804635)
12.00 Call My Bluff (29600)
12.30pm Top Tip Challenge (r) (4470093)
12.55 The Weather Show (T) (53514093)
1.00 One O'Clock News (T) (31548)
1.30 Regional News; Weather (59370068)
1.40 Neighbours (T) (35410426)
2.05 Ironside (r) (5624971)
2.55 Through the Keyhole (r) (T) (5811726)
3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (6277068) **3.45** Spider (5904567) **3.50** Smart on the Road (9619180) **4.05** Rugrats (6070722) **4.30** L & K Friday (3845600) **4.55** Newsround Extra (5488819) **5.10** Blue Peter (9203884)
5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (132529)
6.00 Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (635)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (987)
7.00 Weekend Watchdog with Anne Robinson A new series of the programme (T) (2722)
7.30 Top of the Pops Performances by Boyzone, REM, Beautiful South, Steps, Roxette, Manic Street Preachers and Britney Spears (T) (971)
8.00 Ground Force New series. An update from a revitalised garden in Sanderstead, 18 months after the green-fingered team spent two days creating a colonial summer house (T) (5242)
8.30 The Builders Guy finishes the barn restoration (T) (7277)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (T) (2513)
9.30 Parkinson With Jack Dee and Barbara Windsor (T) (74677)



Comedy with Nick Nolte and Eddie Murphy teaming up again (10.30pm)

10.30 Another 48 Hrs (1990) FILM Comedy thriller sequel, starring Eddie Murphy as the wisecracking convict who once again joins forces with San Francisco cop Nick Nolte. Directed by Walter Hill (T) (88180)
12.00 Blue Chips (1994) FILM A college basketball coach is forced to consider the future following his team's first defeat. With Nick Nolte and Mary McDonnell. Directed by William Friedkin (T) (405469)
1.40am Weather (1146198)
1.45 BBC News 24 (45303933)

10.30 Just Up Your Street (T) (115432) **11.05 He Can't Stop Here** (500616) **11.35 FILM: Another 48 Hrs** (T) (489884) **1.05am FILM: Blue Chips** (T) (150933) **2.45 News Headlines and Weather** (T) (5154285) **2.50-7.00 BBC News 24** (30940469)

BBC2

7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Pingu (7315616) **7.05** Teletubbies (4431136) **7.30** Snorks (8277529) **7.50** Short Change (3205600) **8.18** Rewind (3646971) **8.20** Taz-Mania (5966890) **8.40** Polka Dot Shorts (1921838) **8.50** Pingu (1910722) **9.00** Storytime (7549838) **9.10** See You, See Me (4191513) **9.30** Numbertime (8660819) **9.45** Come Outside (8658074) **10.00** Teletubbies (18109) **10.30** Megamaths (1419258) **10.50** Look & Read (1422722) **11.10** Landmarks (3115432) **11.30** English File (4548) **12.00** Scene (27242) **12.30pm** Working Lunch (52426) **1.00** Johnson and Friends (68777068)
1.10 War Walks The evacuation of May 1940 (T) (41671364)
1.40 Hart-Davis on History Adam Hart-Davis visits a goose fair (35504819)
2.10 Awash with Colour With Suzanne Dando in Dunfanaghy (56291068)
2.40 News; Weather (T) (3118258)
2.45 Match of Their Day (T) (4588432)
3.25 News; Weather (T) (4565884)
3.30 The Village (r) (9385616)
3.55 Kaye Advice show (9393635)
4.25 Ready, Steady, Cook (T) (6072180)
4.55 Esther (T) (5057161)
5.30 Whose House? (364)
6.00 The Simpsons (r) (T) (424646)
6.20 The Simpsons (r) (T) (824682)
6.45 Robot Wars Highlights (T) (135345)
7.15 Electric Circus Gail Porter presents entertainment and computer games news (T) (492172)
7.30 Country House Lady Tavistock and her son fall out (T) (513)
8.00 Trust Me, I'm a Doctor A look at the health benefits of alcohol (T) (3884)
8.30 Gardeners' World Stephen Lacey visits a restored Oxfordshire garden (T) (5819)
9.00 CHOICE **Murder Most Horrid** A fresh-faced police inspector is driven to distraction by the implausible murder confession of eccentric Harriet Snellgrove. Dawn French stars (T) (7105)
9.30 Never Mind the Buzzcocks With DJ Carl Cox (T) (38890)
10.00 The Young Ones (r) (T) (28971)
10.30 Newsnight Including news summary at 11.00 (T) (148155)
11.18 Video Nation Shorts (T) (201513)
11.20 Births, Marriages and Deaths Alan, Terry, and Graham discover Peter's hanging corpse (4/4) (r) (T) (479221)



The Italian soprano Cecilia Bartoli performs in Vicenza (12.15am)

12.15am Bartoli in Italy In a concert recorded last summer in Vicenza, Italy, the mezzo-soprano performs a selection of arias by Handel, Mozart, Bellini, Donizetti and Rossini (737198)
1.45 Later with Jools Holland With Ultra Nate and Tori Amos (r) (2870310)
2.50 Weather (5142440) **2.55** Close
3.00 BBC Learning Zone: GCSE Bitesize Revision: RE (12020) **5.00** Close

HTV

5.30am ITV Morning News (21722)
6.00 GMTV (5651093)
9.25 Trisha (T) (8883722)
10.30 This Morning (T) (44405616)
12.15pm HTV News (4993258)
12.30 ITV Lunchtime News (T) (4465161)
12.54 HTV Crimestoppers (53500890)
12.55 WEST: Getaways (r) (T) (9729971)
12.55 WALES: Wish You Were Here? (r) (T) (9729971)
1.30 Home and Away James comforts Chloe (T) (35512838)
1.55 The Jerry Springer Show (T) (9776822)
2.40 Wheel of Fortune (T) (3916190)
3.10 ITV News Headlines (T) (4564155)
3.15 HTV News (T) (4563426)
3.20 CITV: Mopatop's Shop (4657819) **3.30** Timbuctoo (5994180) **3.35** Animal Stories (9609703) **3.45** Giggly Bitz! (9629567) **4.00** Pump It Up (6171451) **4.35** Comin' Atcha (3942567)
5.00 Home and Away (r) (T) (1426)
5.30 WEST: Sportsweek Highlights (890)
5.30 WALES: Quiz Challenge General knowledge contest (T) (890)
5.58 HTV Weather (647797)
6.00 HTV News (T) (703)
6.30 ITV Evening News; Weather (T) (155)
7.00 Emmerdale Paddy and Zoe have a blazing row (T) (7890)
7.30 Coronation Street Emily babysits for the Malletts (T) (567)
8.00 Parking Wars New six-part series providing an insight into the stress and paranoia involved in finding parking spaces in 1990s Britain (1/6) (T) (3838)
8.30 Days Like These Ron's mother, the appropriately named Hurricane Brenda, pays an eventful visit to the Forman household (T) (2345)
9.00 Britain's Worst Cheats Insight into the unsavoury activities of professional liars, swindlers and thieves, from card sharps to charity fraudsters (T) (9155)
10.00 Mr and Mrs with Julian Clary New series. Return of the classic game show, revamped, revised and presented by Julian Clary (T) (22797)



New arrivals Paul and Kim get into the party mood (10.30pm)

10.30 Pleasure Island New series exploring nightlife in Hedonism II, Jamaica's sexiest adult resort (1/6) (T) (32695)
11.00 ITV Nightly News; Weather (T) (892109)
11.20 HTV News and Weather (T) (787838)
11.30 Wonderful You Clare gets a proposition (2/7) (r) (T) (69529)
12.30am ITV at the Reading Festival Highlights (2/3) (r) (92556)
1.30 Club@vision Dance scene (2496533)
2.15 The Haunted Fishtank (r) (65310)
2.45 SeaQuest DSV Tony is betrayed by an old friend (8172914)
3.40 Trisha Shown earlier (r) (T) (2582662)
4.40 ITV Nightscreen (59113407)
5.00 Coronation Street (r) (T) (75730)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except: **12.20pm-12.30 Central News;** Weather (T) (7068426) **12.55 Home and Away** (T) (4473180) **1.25 The Jerry Springer Show** (T) (4045074) **2.10-2.40 Wish You Were Here?** (r) (T) (56384722) **3.15-3.20 Central News;** Weather (T) (4563426) **5.30 Surprise Gardeners** (890) **6.00-6.30 Central News at Six;** Weather (T) (703) **11.20-11.30 Central News;** Weather (T) (787838) **11.30 Late Tackle** (464600) **12.35am FILM: Shattered Dreams** (T) (293846) **2.15 Club@vision** (2872556) **3.00 Box Office America** (12041914) **3.25 The Haunted Fishtank** (r) (12044001) **3.55 Central Jobfinder '99** (T) (5313117) **5.20-5.30 Asian Eye** (3108310)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except: **12.15pm Westcountry News** (T) (4993258) **12.27-12.30 Illuminations** (7149345) **12.55-1.25 Westcountry Lunchtime Live** (T) (4473180) **1.25 The Jerry Springer Show** (T) (4045074) **2.10-2.40 Home and Away** (T) (56384722) **3.15-3.20 Westcountry News;** Weather (T) (4563426) **4.58-5.00 Birthday People** (7742277) **5.30 Westcountry Weekend** (890) **6.00-6.30 Westcountry Live;** Weather (T) (703) **11.20-11.30 Westcountry News;** Weather (T) (787838) **11.30 FILM: Caddyshack II** (795258) **1.20am-1.30 Generations** (1918198)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except: **12.15pm-12.30 Meridian News;** Weather (4993258) **12.55-1.30 Shortland Street** (9729971) **5.30 Streetwise** (890) **6.00-6.30 Meridian Tonight** (T) (703) **7.29-7.30 Meridian Weather** (480364) **11.20-11.30 Meridian News;** Weather (T) (787838) **5.00am-5.30 Freescreen** (T) (75730)

ANGLIA

As HTV West except: **12.19pm Anglia Air Watch** (7143161) **12.20-12.30 Anglia News and Weather** (7068426) **12.55-1.30 Shortland Street** (9729971) **5.30-6.00 Off the Beaten Track** (8/10) (T) (890) **6.00-6.30 Anglia News** (T) (703) **11.19 Anglia Air Watch** (301567) **11.20-11.30 Anglia News and Weather** (T) (787838)

S4C

Starts: **5.55am Sesame Street** (r) (20034838) **7.00 The Big Breakfast** (67653797) **9.00 Ysgolion:** Off Limits (99006890) **9.25 Schools at Work** (29647722) **9.30 Eureka** (74907093) **9.45 Stop, Look, Listen** (74902548) **10.00 The Complete Cosmos** (14959819) **10.10 TVM** (91678884) **10.25 Iaith ar Daith** (91760819) **10.45 Cynhadledd y Ceidwadwyr** (20168616) **12.45pm Ysgolion: Pa Newydd?:** Planed Plant (67656884) **1.30 Ysgolion:** Enter the Maths Zone (54623635) **1.45 The Technology Programme** (54611890) **2.00 FILM: Dreamboat** (77169635) **3.30 Collectors' Lot** (T) (67989068) **4.00 Fifteen-to-One** (T) (67064703) **4.30 Ricki Lake** (T) (67060987) **5.00 Planed Plant** (90972513) **5.30 Countdown** (T) (67084567) **6.00 Newyddion 6** (T) (93220600) **6.10 Heno** (T) (86883703) **7.00 Pobol y Cwm** (T) (90065277) **7.30 Newyddion** (T) (67061616) **8.00 Cefn Gwlad** (T) (90978797) **8.30 Y Clwb Rygbi** (T) (90053432) **9.00 Friends** (T) (68084884) **9.30 Ramsay's Boiling Point** (1/5) (T) (26699426) **10.00 Brookside** (T) (72510890) **10.35 Frasier** (T) (35615093) **11.05 So Graham Norton** (T) (83619277) **11.45 TFI Friday** (35080819) **12.50am 4 Later;** Pulp (29395759) **1.10 Flava** (91368487) **1.45 The Mod Squad** (90452049) **2.45 Vids** (r) (36628681) **3.10 FILM: The Brides of Fu Manchu** (T) (27351285) **4.40 Diwedd**

CHANNEL 4

5.50am Animal Alphabet (1559068)
5.55 Sesame Street (r) (4118890)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (41971)
9.00 Schools: Off Limits (4023203) **9.25** Schools at Work (8701432) **9.30** Eureka (8655987) **9.45** Stop, Look, Listen (8570242) **10.00** The Complete Cosmos (5971258) **10.10** TVM (9841432) **10.25** 1798 and After (9860567) **10.45** Enter the Maths Zone (9010971) **11.00** The Technology Programme (3984600) **11.15** Stage One (3070451)
11.30 Powerhouse (T) (9616)
12.00 Sesame Street (T) (25838)
12.30pm Bewitched (r) (T) (43722)
1.00 Pet Rescue (T) (24258)
1.30 The Three Stooges (r) (83874123)
1.50 The Red Beret (1953) FILM A conscientious American signs up with the British paratroopers in the early years of the Second World War. With Alan Ladd. Terence Young directs (T) (75194987)
3.30 Collectors' Lot (T) (161)
4.00 Fifteen-to-One (T) (628)
4.30 Countdown (T) (3941838)
4.55 Ricki Lake (T) (5059529)
5.30 Pet Rescue (T) (432)
6.00 TFI Friday With Martine McCutcheon, and the England cricketer Darren Gough. Plus, The Brian Setzer Orchestra, Reef and Des'ree provide the music (55513)
7.00 Channel 4 News; Weather (T) (357548)
7.55 Bodyscapes Mascara (T) (257258)



Claudia Winkleman hosts a new lifestyle game show (8pm)

8.00 CHOICE **Trading Up** New game show in which two sets of contestants get the chance to trade in their old cars for a better model (1/6) (T) (4180)
8.30 Brookside Sinbad gets an unexpected visitor (T) (6667)
9.00 Friends Rachel and Monica fall out over two doctors (r) (T) (1451)
9.30 CHOICE **Smack the Pony** New series. Offbeat sketch starring Fiona Allen, Doon Mackichan and Sally Phillips (1/7) (T) (30258)
10.00 Frasier A series of good deeds backfire (T) (26567)
10.30 So Graham Norton Comedy (861109)
11.10 King of the Hill Hank becomes a volunteer firefighter (T) (429797)
11.40 TFI Friday With actress Martine McCutcheon (r) (832567)
12.45am 4 Later Introduction; Pulp (1203407)
1.00 Flava New series. Sounds from the black music scene (9069488)
1.35 The Mod Squad The team investigate the suspicious death of a narcotics informant (9078136)
2.35 Vids Offbeat video review (r) (8523952)
3.00 The Brides of Fu Manchu (1966) FILM The evil mastermind kidnaps the daughters of world leaders. Starring Christopher Lee. Directed by Don Sharp (352310)
4.35 The Pretenders: No Turn Left Unstoned (r) (9983556)

CHANNEL 5

6.00am 5 News and Sport (2058398)
7.00 WideWorld (r) (T) (8825451)
7.30 Milkshake! (2357277)
7.35 Wimzie's House (r) (4336906)
8.00 Havakazoo (r) (2559529)
8.30 Dappledown Farm (r) (2478600)
9.00 Nancy Lam (r) (T) (2169187)
9.25 Russell Grant's Postcards (4118548)
9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (r) (8485267)
10.20 Sunset Beach (T) (3398890)
11.10 Leeza (9614659)
12.00 5 News at Noon (T) (2552616)
12.30pm Family Affairs Dave tries to get the better of Pete (r) (T) (1930838)
1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful Sally discovers the truth (T) (8824722)
1.30 The Roseanne Show Entertainment and chat; 5 News Update (1939109)
2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (9818838)
2.30 Good Afternoon (1343426)
3.30 A Change of Place (TVM 1994) FILM A shy girl agrees to take her glamorous sister's place on the Paris catwalks, little realising the effect it will have on her life. Drama, with Andrea Roth. Directed by Donna Deitch (5940203)
5.20 5 News (74797677)
5.25 Russell Grant's Postcard A visit to St Seriol's Well in Anglesey (r) (75147118)
5.30 100 Per Cent (2155906)
6.00 5 News; Weather (T) (2152819)
6.30 Family Affairs Declan makes a deadly error (T); 5 News Update (2063971)
7.00 Knight Rider Adventure series, starring David Hasselhoff (r) (9716426)
7.30 Nature of Oz Insight into the world of Australia's kookaburra kingfisher (T); 5 News Update (2069155)
8.00 Was It Good for You? Keen motorcycling fans from Penrith in Cumbria and a retired couple from Bath visit Catalonia in north-east Spain (10/14) (9898074)
8.30 Nick's Quest Nick Baker reports on measures to protect leatherback turtles from extinction, visiting nesting colonies the Costa Rica's Playa Grande, and the newly formed Las Baulas de Guancaste National Park (5/8) (T) (9817109)
9.00 Evidence of Love (TVM 1990) FILM A teacher looking for excitement embarks on an affair with a churchgoing man, leading to a fatal confrontation with his wife. Drama, starring Barbara Hershey, Brian Dennehy, John Terry and Lee Garlington. Directed by Stephen Gyllenhaal (T) (81900093)
10.50 Lexx: The Dark Zone Stories Sci-fi weirdness, starring Eva Habermann (1/4) (r) (7251141)
11.50 Malibu Nights (TVM 1996) FILM Two cops discover that there's more to a seemingly routine murder case than meets the eye. Thriller, with Kurt Schwoebel. Directed by Serge Rodnunsky (8042285)
1.30am Follow the Fleet (1936) FILM Fred Astaire finds romance with Ginger Rogers while on leave from the Navy. Irving Berlin musical, with Randolph Scott and Betty Grable. Mark Sandrich directs (6065759)
3.30 Texas Rangers Ride Again (1940) FILM The Rangers tangle with cattle rustlers. Western sequel, starring John Howard. Directed by James Hogan (82398469)
4.40 Prisoner: Cell Block H (7770778)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (8444285)

SATELLITE, CABLE AND DIGITAL

● For further listings see Saturday's *Vision*

SKY ONE

7.00am Count Duckula (74277) **7.30** The Chris Evans Breakfast Show (88068) **8.30** Hollywood Squares (47074) **9.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (57161) **10.00** The Oprah Winfrey Show (86068) **11.00** Guilty! (62432) **12.00** Jenny Jones (95109) **1.00pm** Mad About You (73548) **1.30** Jeopardy (75345) **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (37258) **3.00** Jenny Jones (96857) **4.00** Guilty! (89074) **5.00** Star Trek: Voyager (4155) **6.00** America's Dumbest Criminals (1987) **6.30** Friends (5567) **7.00** The Simpsons (5884) **7.30** The Simpsons (4451) **8.00** Dating Hell (34068) **9.00** World's Most Shocking Moments (10432) **10.00** Cops (59819) **10.30** Cops (68567) **11.00** Friends (80703) **11.30** Star Trek: Voyager (56600) **12.30am** The Commish (58776) **1.30** Long Play (1508353)

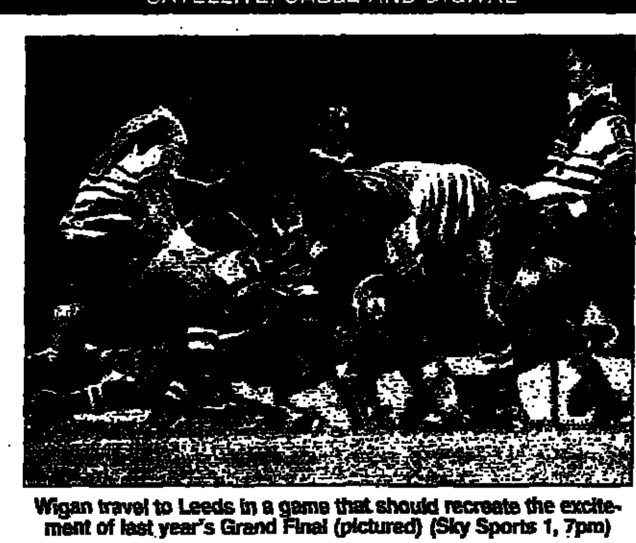
... to Home (1997) (57451) **7.00** P-Review (6180) **7.30** UK Top 10 (6819) **8.00** Rumble in the Bronx (1996) (45838) **9.30** Jackie Chan's First Strike (1996) (11432) **11.00** Steel (1997) (196838) **12.40am** Omega Doom (1996) (5449961) **2.05** New Jack City (1991) (581575) **3.45** Bloodhounds II (1997) (381933)

SKY CINEMA

4.00pm Desert Rats (1953) (7932819) **6.00** City Across the River (1949) (2262068) **8.00** McQ (1974) (2287513) **10.00** Greatest Show On Earth (1952) (80167884) **12.35am** The Flood Who Walked the West (1958) (4538020) **2.20** Valley of Eagles (1952) (88597204) **3.45** Along Came Jones (1955) (25508469)

FILMFOUR

6.00pm Short Attention Span Cinema (4887242) **8.00** The Cincinnati Kid (1965) (87082964) **9.40** I Think I Was an Alcoholic ...



Wigan travel to Leeds in a game that should recreate the excitement of last year's Grand Final (pictured) (Sky Sports 1, 7pm)



GOLF 45
Montgomerie struggles to cope with injustices of life

SPORT

BOXING 50
Lewis insists that Holyfield should hand over belts



Trainer celebrates delayed Gold Cup triumph as favourites falter in Festival showpiece

Nicholls back in business as fortune changes

BY ALAN LEE, RACING CORRESPONDENT

THE sense of injustice that pervaded Gold Cup day a year ago was finally and emphatically assuaged yesterday. The connections of See More Business will still never know what might have been if their horse had not been so controversially carried out of the race last year, but they now know that they possess the champion that they always believed he would be.

A Tote Gold Cup crowded with elements dramatic, depressing and even dumbfounding resolved itself into a duel up the final hill between two of the neglected horses in a glittering field. Go Ballistic, at 66-1, threatened to become the longest-priced winner since Sirrell Griffiths abandoned his cows for the day to turn out Norton's Coin in 1990, but See More Business, at 16-1, was not to be denied.

His glory, perhaps, had been delayed 12 months when Cyborgo, trained by Paul Nicholls's Somerset neighbour, Martin Pipe, diverted him in a way that caused barely concealed resentment. Little has gone right for See More Business since then, but this was an occasion when application of blinkers was an undeniable factor. His mind was focused, his jumping precise and, when it mattered, he stayed strong to the line.

He won by a length, with the favourite, Ireland's Florida Pearl, a further 17 lengths back in third. For Teeton Mill, carrying the hopes and the cash of much of Britain, the race ended before its halfway point and, sadly, it may be his last. A serious tendon injury brought a swift suggestion of retirement.

There was a cruel irony in Teeton Mill breaking down approaching the downhill fence before the straight, the same fence at which Nick Dundee fell so heavily on Wednesday. These were the potential champions that had teased the loyalties of their jockey, Norman Williamson, when it seemed that they might both be aimed at the Gold Cup. Now, through misfortunes on the same patch of Cotswold turf, they are no longer the stuff of dreams but of regretful small print.

Unsinkable Boxer and Suny Bay, the best-backed outsiders on the day, were also pulled up, the former bursting a blood vessel, and Dorans Pride, the other great Irish hope, finished a disappointing eighth, jumping raggedly as Paul Carberry tried to set a searching pace. It meant that the race was made for the serious stayers and See More Business has no defects in that department. Probably, the way the week has gone, we should have expected it to turn out this way.

For this was another steeplechaser trained by Nicholls, part-owned by Paul Barber and ridden by Mick Fitzgerald, and this has been emphatically their Festival. Their confidence in this horse was not as it had been for Call Equiname 24 hours earlier, but the outcome was the same. Fitzgerald, who finished the Festival as the leading jockey with four winners, judged his moment immaculately and, at the last, he demanded everything.

"I needed a long one and thought, 'you're either coming up or going down'," he said. On the long run-in, he exploited intimate knowledge of his rival. "I've won six races on Go Ballistic," he said. "I knew what he was capable of."

Those capabilities had been well hidden of late, at least until his second to Cyfor Malta on this course in January. Go Ballistic had seemed one of the few who, rationally, could not win, but as Sheila Lockhart, his owner, said: "No one had told him that."

Oddly, both protagonists in the final duel were their stable's second string. Nicholls's stable jockey, Joe Tizzard, had been given no choice in the Champion Chase, but here he had opted to ride Double Thriller, who finished a gallant fourth and is now favourite in most bookmakers' lists for the Grand National on April 10. Go Ballistic was ridden by Tony Dobbin because Richard Johnson was on David Nicholson's more fancied Escartefigue, who trailed in seventh.

Nicholls, though, had been telling anyone who cared to listen that See More Business was no forlorn hope and now here he was, fresh-faced and stocky, waiting to meet Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother for the second successive day. Alongside him stood Barber, mopping his brow with a hand that refused to stop shaking.

Barber, a dairy farmer, owns Nicholls's yard and surveys all that happens there from his house at the head of the drive. "I don't know if anyone can know what it feels like," he said. "I thought he was good enough to win last year and I was devastated that he was carried out in that extraordinary manner. To come back and win is a dream come true."

For the pilgrims of Florida Pearl, the dream is at best delayed for a year. He was not the first of Willie Mullins's horses to have disappointed this week and, while youth remains on his side, he is not yet the champion Ireland craves.

BEATING THE FIELD

ROB WRIGHT, *The Times* tipster, closed the book on the Festival in style yesterday. He picked out Anzum, the 40-1 winner of the Stayers Hurdle, was the only national newspaper expert to tip See More Business to win the Gold Cup at 16-1 and followed up with Space Trucker at 7-2 in the Grand Annual Chase. The profit on a £1 win treble would be £3,136.50.

GOLD CUP RESULT

1, **See More Business**	16-1
2, **Go Ballistic**	66-1
3, **Florida Pearl**	5-2 fav

ON OTHER PAGES



HUGH ROUTLEDGE

See More Business lands safely in front of the stands on his way to a famous victory in the Tote Cheltenham Gold Cup yesterday

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 1669

ACROSS
1 Arab souk (6)
5 S Pacific canoe (4)
9 Parliamentary record (7)
10 Healthy energy (6)
11 Sculptor's preliminary model (8)
12 Disprove (6)
15 Ask for review; be attractive (6)
18 French stick; cut gem (8)
20 Capital of Canada (6)
22 Portia's maid *(M of V)* (7)
23 Inquisitive (4)
24 Stick and ball game (6)

DOWN
2 (Hindu) religious community (6)
3 Proclaim (8)
4 Cook in oven (5)
6 Circus arena; one round Saturn (4)
7 Fine-tune (6)
8 Word modifying adjective (6)
13 Relating to court of law (8)
14 Goneril's husband; NY capital (6)
16 A clog (6)
17 Machine-gun from air (6)
19 Circumference (5)
21 Reference line; centre of rotation (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1668
ACROSS: 1 Parlance 5 Fair 9 Lofty 10 Onerous 11 Chassis 12 Unfed 13 Tough love 18 Tagus 20 Fishing 22 Proviso 23 Rhino 24 Dusk 25 Credence
DOWN: 1 Policy 2 Refract 3 Abyss 4 Cross the floor 6 Aloof 7 Reside 8 Regulo 14 Unsaid 15 Elision 16 Stupid 17 Ignore 19 Gloss 21 Shred

Hoddle outcasts brought back into fold by Keegan

BY OLIVER HOLT
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

KEVIN KEEGAN declared an England amnesty at Lancaster Gate yesterday and brought the rebels and the renegades marching back into the squad for the crucial European championship qualifying tie against Poland next week.

The rough diamonds Glenn Hoddle could not handle are being polished again. In a press conference that was an inspiring as it was forthright, Keegan used his first squad announcement as the national team's part-time manager to initiate a sweeping rehabilitation of the men left on the outside in the last fractious months of Hoddle's doomed regime.

There were call-ups for Chris Sutton, the Blackburn Rovers striker who refused to play for the England B team, for Ray Parlour, the Arsenal midfield player who famously asked Eileen Drewery for a short, back and sides when she offered to lay her hands on him and for Andy Cole, the Manchester United striker, who called Hoddle a coward.

In all of those choices, Keegan not only threw down the gauntlet to a group of supremely talented players with something to prove but he also stamped his authority on the job immediately by emphasising that he is confident of coping with even the strongest of English football's millionaire personalities.

In particular, he said he was determined to sort out the lingering bitterness that exists between Robbie Fowler and Graeme Le Saux after their prolonged and unsavoury altercation. Keegan, who picked 24 players rather than the usual 22, stressed that he saw it as a priority to re-establish a feeling of unity and camaraderie in the squad. It is even possible that he is considering banishing Le Saux and Fowler if they do not patch up their differences, hence the two extra names released yesterday in a list that also rewarded Tim Sherwood for his outstanding form since his move to Tottenham Hotspur.

"I am going to get Le Saux and Fowler in a room together," Keegan said. "They have got to, in some way, repair the damage that has been done. We are part of an England squad and the last thing we want is any friction or bad feeling between any players who are playing for the same cause. I'll let you know what happens. I hope I can solve it."

Part of Keegan's magic as a manager is his ability to create an intensely positive atmosphere around his sides, so it is even more important for him to stamp out internal dissent immediately. He furthered that cause yesterday by refusing to criticise Sutton for his actions, by being candid about the fact that he would have taken Ray Parlour to the World Cup last summer if he had been in charge and by taking an almost childish delight in his new duties as England coach.

He said he had felt like any other England supporter as he tried to pick his squad for the match at Wembley a week tomorrow that he knows England must win. He doodled names on a piece of paper before whittling them down to 24 by including only two goalkeepers.

Sutton's name survived. "I think he deserves a second chance. I walked out on Don Revie once. I also threw my shirt off at Wembley when I got sent off so, I can't sit up here and criticise other players too much. You do things under that kind of pressure sometimes that even you don't understand. Chris is 26 and he has still some potential to fulfil. The next step is to make it into the team."

Contrary to much of the advance speculation about the problematic left midfield position, Keegan did not include any natural left- footers like Jason Wilcox, Scott Sellars or Steve Guppy. That suggests he is likely either to move Le Saux forward into midfield or, more probably, to take a gamble on Steve McManaman, who filled that role with such success during the 1996 European championship but seemed to be mistrusted by Hoddle.

If it was starting to look a little like the beginning of *The Dirty Dozen*, but that image was diluted by the exclusion of Paul Gascoigne, whose chances had been spoiled by recent lack of opportunities to prove his fitness. Keegan was still keen to praise him, though. "I bumped into him at King's Cross just after I got the job," he said. The laughter started then. "Did you trip over him?" someone asked. But Keegan just smiled. He has got his hands full for now.

ENGLAND SQUAD

GOALKEEPERS: N Martyn (Leeds United), D Seaman (Arsenal)
DEFENDERS: T Adams (Arsenal), S Campbell (Tottenham Hotspur), R Ferdinand (West Ham United), M Keown (Arsenal), G Neville (Manchester United), P Neville (Manchester United), G Le Saux (Chelsea), A Hinchcliffe (Sheffield Wednesday), G Southgate (Aston Villa)
MIDFIELD PLAYERS: S McManaman (Liverpool), P Scholes (Manchester United), D Beckham (Manchester United), D Batty (Leeds United), R Parlour (Arsenal), D Anderton (Tottenham Hotspur), T Sherwood (Tottenham Hotspur), J Redknapp (Liverpool)
FORWARDS: A Cole (Manchester United), A Shearer (Newcastle United), M Owen (Liverpool), R Fowler (Liverpool), C Sutton (Blackburn Rovers)

RICHARD CANNON



Keegan radiates optimism while naming his first squad